



Hard Choices Ahead

The Chatham House–YouGov Survey 2012

British Attitudes Towards the UK's International Priorities

Jonathan Knight, Robin Niblett and Thomas Raines

July 2012



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What the world thinks

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Preface

This is the third survey of British attitudes towards the UK's international priorities that Chatham House has developed in partnership with YouGov. The first survey took place in the immediate aftermath of the 2010 UK general election (24 June–2 July 2010); the second was conducted twelve months later (17–23 June 2011). This latest survey was conducted between 13 and 21 June 2012, and again tests British thinking about the country's place in the world and how this thinking may have changed since the coalition government came to power.

As with the two previous surveys, Chatham House asked YouGov to measure not only the attitudes of the British general public, drawing on a survey sample of 2,079 individuals, but also those of a group of 735 'opinion-formers' from YouGovStone.¹ The intention is to highlight any differences of opinion between these two groups, each of which can bring a different sort of pressure to bear on the government's international policy choices, especially at a time of severe budget cuts.

While a number of the questions were identical to those of the 2011 and 2010 surveys, allowing for comparison between the three sets of results, the 2012 survey contains new questions that seek to probe more deeply public and opinion-former attitudes to some of the government's international objectives. This year we have included a special focus on the UK's relations with the European Union at a time of great uncertainty regarding the future of the European project; the results are addressed in detail in chapter three.

The following analysis does not address all of the results, but rather offers a synopsis of some of the main points from the survey, considering their implications for the coalition government's intention to implement a 'distinctive' foreign policy, with particular reference to the hard choices which will need to be made in the coming years, notably over Europe. It also features analysis by Rob Bailey, Benoît Gomis and Jane Kinninmont of Chatham House and two external expert commentators – Dr Constanze Stelzenmüller, a Senior Transatlantic Fellow at the German Marshall Fund of the United States; and Peter Kellner, President of YouGov. Our thanks to them for their contributions.

Our hope is that readers will look through the results in detail and form their own conclusions. YouGov has provided a breakdown of the results from the general public by stated voting intention, 2010 vote, gender, age, 'social grade' and region, while the YouGovStone results are broken down by party affiliation voting intention and then by sector.² Chatham House has created a dedicated website (chathamhousesurvey.org) which allows the results to be filtered by sample (general public and opinion-formers) and category (voting intention, age etc.), where you can also access the full survey results.

We would like to acknowledge the hard work and research assistance of Rachel Franklin during the development of the survey questions and the analysis of the results. We also thank Nico Petty, Antoni Rybaczyk and Holly Young for their assistance with the preparation of the tables of results. Finally, we are very grateful, as always, for the editorial support provided by Margaret May and Nicolas Bouchet in our Publications team.

Jonathan Knight, Robin Niblett and Thomas Raines
Chatham House
July 2012

1 For a full definition of YouGovStone, see the Appendix, page 35. YouGovStone panellists are opinion-formers drawn from a wide range of sectors including government, business and the media.

2 Figures which refer to the general public's political party affiliations are drawn from 2010 voting data, unless stated otherwise. For the opinion-formers, the figures use voting intention data.

Executive Summary

Reviewing a 'distinctive' British foreign policy

As a medium-sized power in the midst of a protracted economic downturn and under severe resource constraints, the United Kingdom faces hard choices in its foreign policy. Despite this, the coalition government entered office with high ambitions to develop a 'distinctive' British foreign policy. This was to involve no 'strategic shrinkage', the vigorous promotion of British businesses and trade interests, a cautious approach to European integration, a reinvigorated but rebalanced relationship with the US, and strengthened relations with emerging powers.

The survey results indicate broad alignment between the government's priorities and the views of the public. Both the general public and opinion-formers rank commercial diplomacy as a top priority in British foreign policy. 47% of the public believe that national interests should drive UK policy. And there is a close correlation between the government's approach to its relations with the European Union (EU) and the sceptical attitude of the British public towards Europe. There is increasing recognition of the importance of engaging with emerging economies such as China, India and Brazil.

However, the public is not convinced by the coalition's performance. A significant proportion – 32% – believe that the coalition has changed British foreign policy for the worse; 41% see no difference, and only 6% believe things have changed for the better. This view is largely shared by opinion-formers, 52% of whom see no difference, while 24% believe things have changed for the worse.

The results appear to reflect a growing defensiveness and unease among the general public towards developments in international affairs. Rather than favouring an internationalist or transformative foreign policy, a majority (51%) think the government's top priority should be protecting the British 'homeland' from threats such as terrorism.

Britain and the European Union: drifting apart

The survey confirms the ambivalent view of the British public concerning the EU. While other countries in Europe regard further European integration as part of the solution to present crises and a response to long-term trends, the UK general public remains extremely sceptical about deeper European integration and about the EU itself.

A clear majority (57%) of the general public would like to vote on the UK's membership of the EU. And in such a referendum, almost half (49%) would vote for the UK to leave the EU altogether. Further economic integration was particularly unpopular: 60% of the public have no desire for the UK to join the single currency at any point in the future. However, when presented with a broader range of options than a simple 'in/out' choice, the most popular preference was not for the UK's withdrawal but continuing membership of a less integrated EU, more akin to a free trade area.

In addition, a clear majority of the public continues to favour closer cooperation with EU partners across a range of policy areas that would improve UK security and prosperity. For their part, opinion-formers remain firmly convinced of the centrality of Europe to Britain's future. 53% are opposed to a referendum and 63% would vote for the UK to remain a member.

An island alone?

In the context of entrenched public scepticism towards the UK's future in the European Union, what might be the cornerstones of a more independent UK foreign policy? No consensus view emerges. Both the general public and the opinion-formers express a continued attachment to the UK's status as a great power. But this is where the similarities between the two groups end. The general public views the armed forces as the country's greatest foreign policy asset, even though most would only be in favour of the use of military force when UK interests and territory are under threat. For opinion-formers, the BBC World Service and other aspects of British soft power are more important.

This divide extends to overseas aid. In stark contrast to opinion-formers, who are decisively in favour of the importance and benefits of UK government spending on overseas aid, the public holds largely negative attitudes. Although the public greatly overestimates the amount Britain spends on aid, there is a general belief (56%) that the UK should give 'not very much' or none at all; when informed of the actual UK spending on development in real terms, 61% still felt that this was too high. In addition, Britons appear to be returning to traditional allies. Favourable views of the United States increased from 20% (2010) to 34% (2012), while unfavourable views have fallen from 17% to 8% in this period.

Conservatives are from Mars, Liberal Democrats are from Venus

Given the challenges in the world and the turmoil within the EU, as well as the pressure on resources at home, the coalition government will most likely need to make some hard foreign policy choices. But the survey offers no clear mandate for future action, nor any consensus approach to British foreign policy.

In this context, it is notable that, until now, there have not been significant public clashes within the coalition over foreign policy as there have been over certain domestic policies. The two parties have achieved a commendable unity of purpose, pursuing a pragmatic course in foreign policy. However, the 2012 results reveal deep divisions between supporters of the two halves of the coalition government on the principles, philosophy, priorities, means and ends of UK foreign policy. And these patterns are particularly striking among those currently intending to vote for the two parties.

For example, 65% of Liberal Democrats believe that UK foreign policy should be based at least in part on ethical considerations, while 64% of Conservatives favour a foreign policy based on a keen pursuit of the national interest. Almost three-quarters of Conservatives support holding a referendum on membership of the EU, as opposed to only 40% of Liberal Democrats. Given a vote, 64% of Liberal Democrats would choose to remain a member, while 69% of Conservatives would vote to leave the EU altogether. For Conservatives, international terrorism (59%) is the greatest threat to the British way of life; for Liberal Democrats, it is the failure of the international financial system (55%). This pattern is repeated across the survey: Conservatives and Liberal Democrats tend to hold starkly opposing views, while Labour voters tend to be somewhere between the two.

Hard choices ahead

One of the difficulties for British policy-makers will be to make sense of the contradictions and aspirations of public and opinion-former attitudes to British foreign policy reflected in this survey. Policy-makers must decide on the degree to which they choose to respond to the views of the public, or attempt to lead public opinion in support of less popular policies. For example:

- Can the coalition government construct a viable future for the UK within, but on the margins of, a more integrated EU? Would the British public thank or punish the government for offering it a stark referendum on staying in or exiting the EU in order to seal the decision?
- Can the government win public support for growing levels of spending on overseas aid by emphasizing the direct benefits such spending might accrue for the country's long-term security?

- Can smaller armed forces meet popular ambitions for the UK to remain a great power? What happens if the UK is drawn into a military conflict with Iran in support of the US and others?

Resources would provide a greater range of alternatives and a degree of discretion on each of these decisions. But budgetary pressure across government is unlikely to ease, and foreign policy, with the exception of development spending, will not be treated as a special case. As Sir Ernest Rutherford once said, ‘Gentlemen, we have run out of money. It is time to start thinking.’³ The challenge will be to square the UK’s own large ambitions, the limited resources at its disposal, and the often contradictory instincts of the general public.

3 Cited in Edward Luce, *Time to Start Thinking: America and the Spectre of Decline* (London: Little, Brown, 2012), p. vii.

1 Introduction

The third YouGov–Chatham House survey was undertaken in June 2012 during a turbulent period in international affairs. The sovereign debt crisis in the eurozone has worsened, but consensus on how to achieve deeper fiscal and economic integration among euro members has proved elusive, raising fundamental questions about the future of the European project. Throughout the West, low growth is placing strains on employment and government spending, worsening individual economic prospects across societies. Combined with sustained dynamism in the emerging economies, this has accelerated the shift in the centre of economic gravity from the Atlantic to the Pacific.

In the Middle East and North Africa, the popular uprisings which began in early 2011 are imperilled by complex political and generational transitions, while Syria has descended into a bloody civil war. Afghanistan remains on a knife-edge as the United States, the UK and other NATO allies gradually withdraw their active fighting forces. China's once-in-a-decade leadership transition has been unexpectedly rocky, while, at the same time, the United States is formally reorientating its foreign policy towards the Asia–Pacific region. Meanwhile, terrorism is metastasizing across the greater Middle East, with Yemen, Somalia and now West Africa plagued by the pressures of endemic militancy.

As a medium-sized country under severe economic stress at this time of international uncertainty, the UK faces a number of hard choices for its foreign policy. The coalition government must allocate limited resources effectively while maintaining a flexible posture to deal with unexpected shocks and pursue the economic opportunities that the global economic rebalancing now offers. It will have to decide what approach to take to an integrating Europe, and to what extent working within the European Union is going to be a core channel of Britain's future international influence. And it needs to consider what would be the cornerstones of a more independent, ambitious British foreign policy – whether the armed forces, elements of the UK's soft power such as the BBC, its universities or the country's role as a leading aid donor – and who should be the UK's closest allies and partners.

With this in mind, this year's survey again examines public and 'opinion-former' attitudes to the UK's foreign policy priorities and the means and ends of its international influence. The responses to the 2012 survey demonstrate that the government will find it difficult to build consensus around the choices it makes on major international questions, given the varied attitudes – sometimes contradictory – of the British public and opinion-formers.

In section two we explore the extent to which the public shares the government's 'interest-based' approach to foreign policy-making and reveal how the defensiveness of the UK public towards developments in international affairs appears to have led to a degree of popular disillusionment with the government's approach.

In section three, the survey assesses the depth of British antipathy towards the EU, taking into account the dramatic steps now being taken in European financial integration in the wake of the eurozone crisis. If the UK does not see the EU as a central vehicle for the country's future prosperity and security, what are the alternatives? Section four considers public attitudes to the policies and capabilities that might constitute the cornerstones of a more independent UK foreign policy. Britons still take a fairly exceptionalist view of their place in the world and believe that the country still has assets which may allow it to 'punch above its weight'.

Section five exposes the deep divisions between the supporters of the two halves of the coalition government concerning which aspects of UK foreign policy will be most important in the future – hard or soft power, interests or ethics, the importance of overseas aid – and on the role of the European Union in furthering Britain's interests.

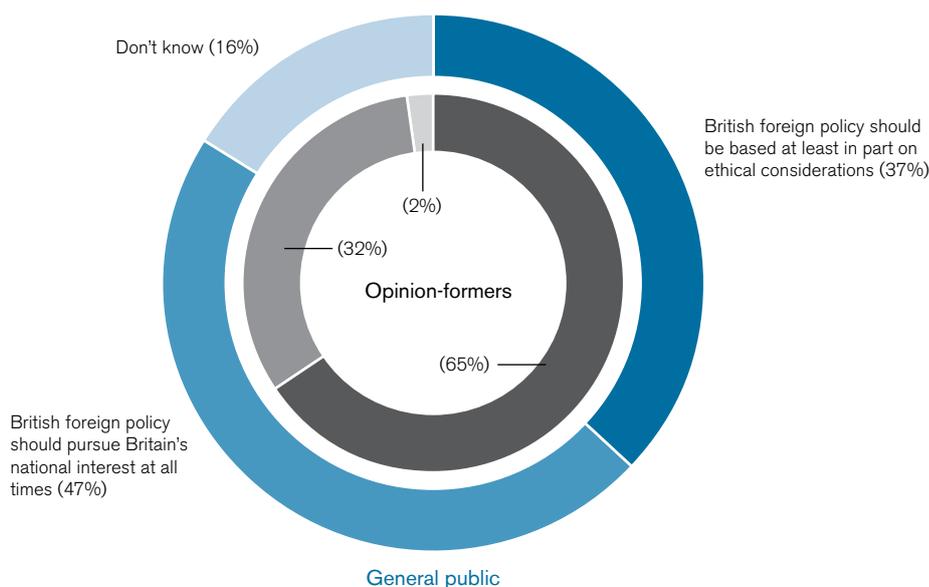
2 Reviewing a 'Distinctive' British Foreign Policy

On coming to power in May 2010, the coalition government set itself the ambition to develop a more 'distinctive' British foreign policy, driven by a keen focus on 'the national interest'. This would make it a priority to promote British businesses and trade interests, especially by strengthening relations with emerging powers; emphasize bilateral relationships over multilateral institutions and processes; take a cautious but pragmatic approach to European integration; reinvigorate but rebalance the UK's relationship with the United States; and seek to integrate the UK's defence, security and development policies so as to improve British security. Despite the continuing impact of the global financial crisis and the sovereign debt crisis in Europe, there would be no 'strategic shrinkage'.⁴

The 2012 results show that, as in 2011, there is close alignment between many of the coalition government's priorities and the views of the general public:

- Both the general public and opinion-formers agree with the importance of commercial diplomacy. Opinion-formers asserted that promoting British business should be the top priority of UK foreign policy, with 50% selecting this option.⁵ For the general public, this policy was still ranked second.
- The general public favours a foreign policy driven by interests rather than ethical considerations or values, in direct disagreement with opinion-formers. Among the general public, 47% believe that the national interest alone should drive UK foreign policy, with only 37% believing that ethical considerations should also play a role. The vast majority of opinion-formers – 65% – regard ethical considerations as more important (see Figure 1).

Figure 1: Should ethical considerations shape foreign policy?

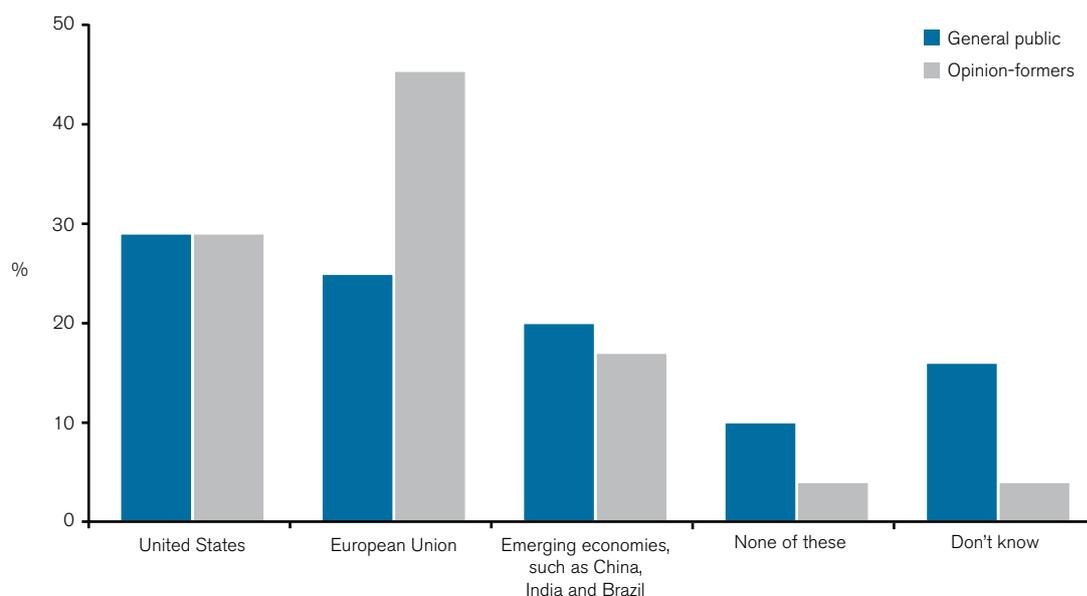


4 William Hague, 'Opening statement, Foreign Affairs and Defence debate on the Queen's speech', Hansard, 26 May 2010, Column 174, <http://www.publications.parliament.uk/pa/cm201011/cmhansrd/cm100526/debtext/100526-0004.htm>. In a similar vein, in the early months of the coalition government's term in office, David Cameron rejected the 'thesis of decline' which had, in his view, become prevalent with regard to the UK's place in the world. See David Cameron, 'Speech to the Lord Mayor's Banquet', Mansion House, London, 15 November 2010, <http://www.number10.gov.uk/news/speeches-andtranscripts/2010/11/speech-to-lord-mayors-banquet-57068>.

5 These figures are based on the respondents selecting up to three options.

- When asked which countries the UK should have the closest ties with, 20% of the general public selected emerging economies such as China, India and Brazil, quite close to the totals for the US and the EU (29% and 25% respectively; see Figure 2). However, at 18%, China garnered quite a high unfavourable rating, mirroring the results from the 2011 survey (see Table 1, page 26).

Figure 2: Who should Britain have closest ties with?



The coalition's performance

However, as in 2011, there was significant public scepticism among respondents as to whether the coalition, now almost halfway through its parliamentary term, had successfully changed the nature and direction of UK foreign policy to cope with the changing world. For example:

- A significant proportion of the general public respondents – 32% – believe that the coalition government has changed British foreign policy for the worse; 41% see no difference, while only 6% believe the coalition has changed UK foreign policy for the better (see Figure 3a).⁶
- Even among members of the general public who voted Conservative or Liberal Democrat in the 2010 general election, a majority or plurality see no difference in the government's approach, and more respondents in these groups believe things have changed for the worse rather than the better (see Figure 3b).

The views of opinion-formers were largely similar. A majority – 52% – believe the coalition government has made no difference; this included a majority of Liberal Democrats and a near-majority of Conservatives. Overall, 24% selected 'worse' and only 16% believe that things have changed for the better (see Figures 4a and 4b).

6 It is worth noting that 20% of respondents selected 'Don't know' when answering this question.

Figure 3a: Would you say that the coalition government has changed UK foreign policy for the better, for the worse, or has made no difference? (General public)

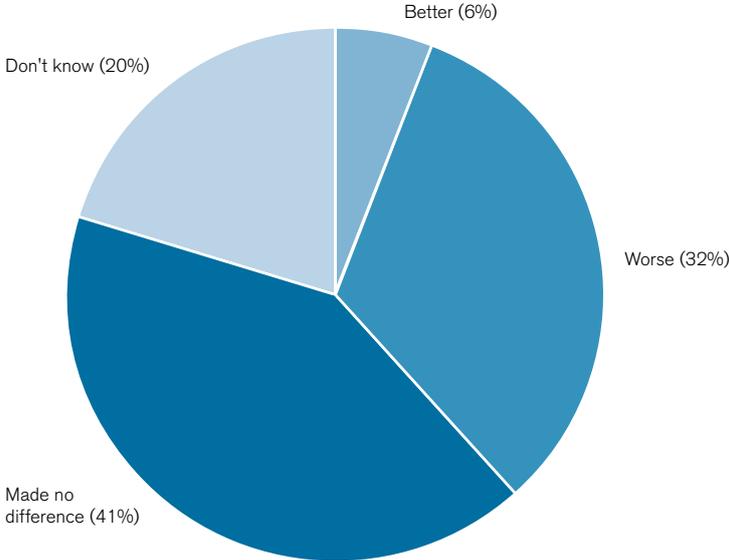
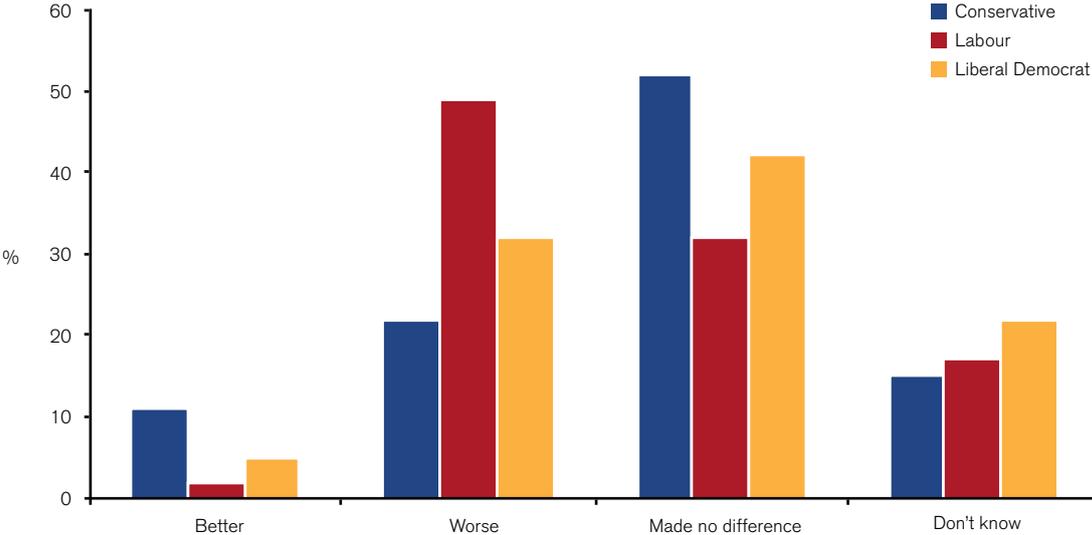


Figure 3b: Would you say that the coalition government has changed UK foreign policy for the better, for the worse, or has made no difference? (General public)



Note: This figure uses '2010 vote' data rather than 'Voting intention'.

Figure 4a: Would you say that the coalition government has changed UK foreign policy for the better, for the worse, or has made no difference? (Opinion-formers)

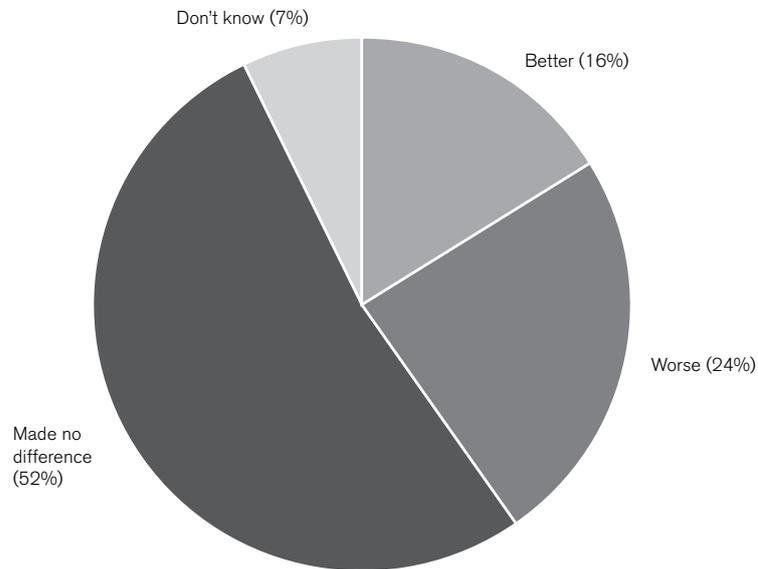
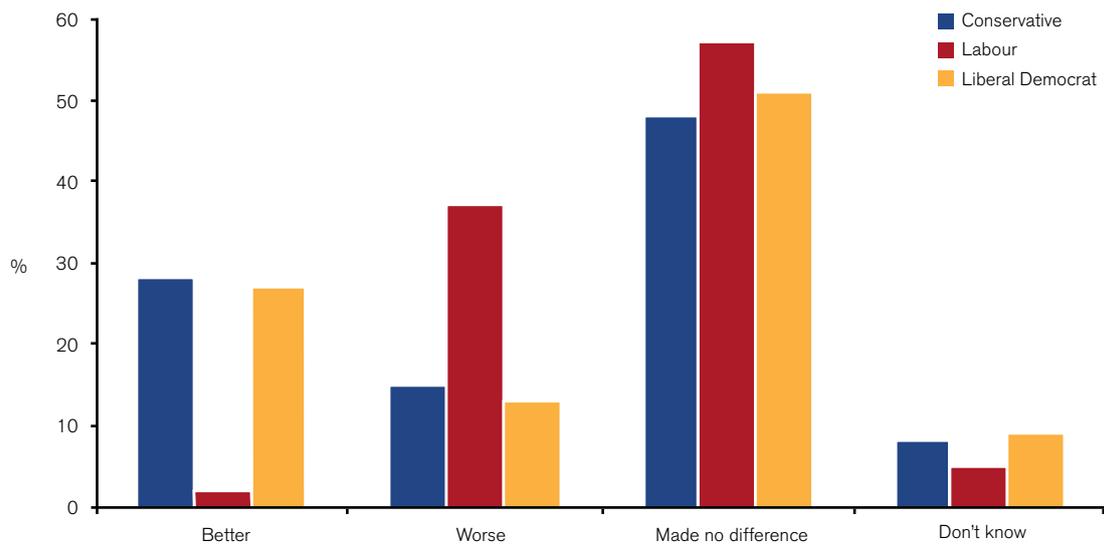


Figure 4b: Would you say that the coalition government has changed UK foreign policy for the better, for the worse, or has made no difference? (Opinion-formers)



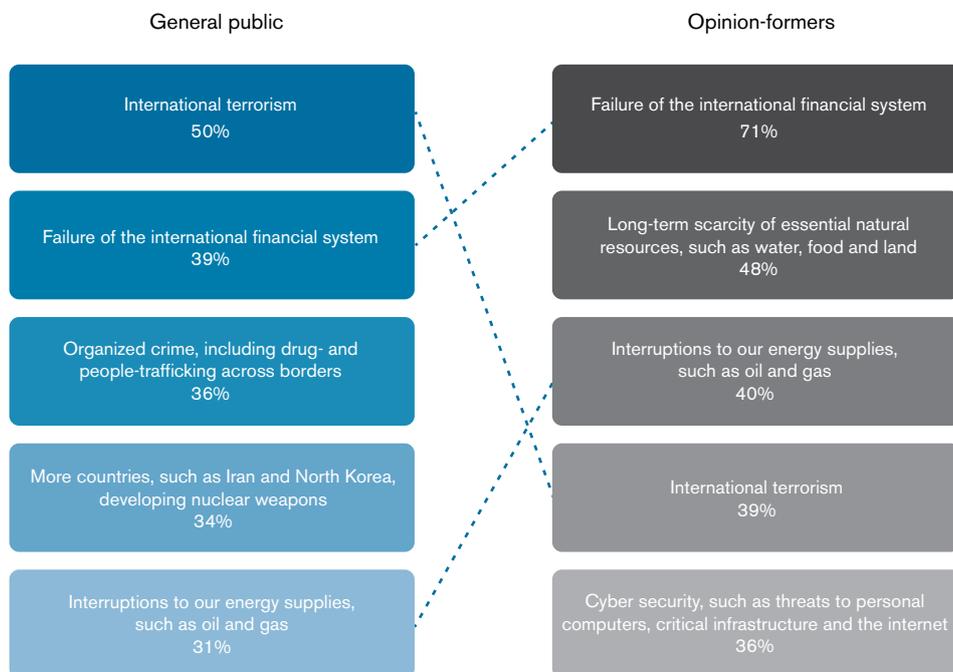
Note: This figure uses 'Voting intention' data.

Threats and priorities

These relatively negative ratings for the government’s foreign policy could simply be a mirror of the overall decline in the popularity of its domestic performance. But it is also possible that the government’s distinctive foreign policy does not yet correlate fully with popular concerns about the changing world. It is noticeable that, when asked what threats it fears most and what should be the government’s priorities, the general public, at least, takes a far more defensive approach than the government:

- International terrorism, at 50%, is considered the greatest threat to the British way of life by the general public. In contrast, 71% of opinion-formers regard the failure of the international financial system as the predominant concern for the UK (see Figure 5).⁷
- Although both the general public and opinion-formers agree on the importance of economic risks, the general public ranks hard security concerns such as terrorism and the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction more highly than opinion-formers, who are more concerned with threats related to economics, resources and energy.
- 51% of the general public believe protecting the UK at its borders, including counter-terrorism, should be the main priority of UK foreign policy. Among those intending to vote Conservative, this proportion is as high as 65%, although only 38% of Liberal Democrats have the same view.⁸
- While opinion-formers support the coalition’s emphasis on commercial diplomacy and the need to promote British business interests – 50% considered this to be the UK’s top foreign policy priority – only 29% of the general public supported this focus.
- There is little general public support for the government’s policies to tackle climate change or promote democracy and human rights. Although these issues are not ranked highly by opinion-formers either, the percentage totals are higher in their responses.

Figure 5: What are the five greatest threats to the British way of life?



Note: Only the top five results in each sample have been included in this figure.

⁷ These figures are based on the respondents selecting up to four options.

⁸ These figures are based on the respondents selecting up to three options.

Fearing the worst: terrorism and the British public

Benoît Gomis

Research Analyst, International Security

There is a persistent belief among the British public that international terrorism remains the greatest threat to the British way of life and that countering it should be the main priority in UK foreign policy. Both views consistently rank first in their respective categories over the past three years of the survey. However, three interesting subtleties emerge from these results. First, age is an important factor: the younger you are, the less likely you are to be concerned with terrorism; only 33% of the 18–24-year-olds consider international terrorism to be the greatest threat to the British way of life, compared to 59% for those aged 60 and over. Second, inhabitants of London are relatively less concerned by terrorism (45% selected it as the greatest threat) than people living in the rest of the south (53%), the Midlands/Wales (47%) and the north (54%). This is somewhat surprising given London's historical prominence as Britain's main target of terrorist attacks. Third, there are clear differences between opinion-formers and the general public. Among opinion-formers, terrorism ranks only fourth as a threat to the British way of life.

By definition, terrorist attacks are designed to cause fear and panic in order to bring about political change. This year's survey results confirm the trend of distorted perceptions among the overall British public. Understandably, the public fears risks over which it has little control. But the statistical likelihood of being killed by a terrorist attack in the UK ranks significantly below cancer (more than 150,000 deaths in 2010); smoking (almost 100,000 people died from smoking-related diseases in 2011); alcohol (more than 15,000 people per year die from alcohol poisoning and related diseases); HIV (accounting for around 682 deaths in 2010); car accidents (more than 5 people die on UK roads every day); or even traffic pollution (almost 5,000 deaths per year).

However, an overriding sense of fear remains. The reality is that no government in the world can prevent every single terrorist attack, and terrorism should therefore be seen not as a threat to the British way of life but as a risk to be managed and contained. And although terrorist violence is likely to remain a fact of life, the government should place a high priority on addressing the pervading sense of fear that the potential for future attacks appears to induce.

3 Britain and the European Union: Drifting Apart

European countries currently face twin trends: first, relative economic decline in a world of increasing international competition; and, second, a range of external challenges that cannot be addressed by any one country alone. In this context, most EU member states regard deeper integration as a means of protecting their interests, societies and welfare. But the momentum to deepen EU political and economic integration in the wake of the euro crisis appears to be having the reverse effect on the UK. Within sections of the British public, media and political elite, Euroscepticism is on the rise. For a new generation of Conservative MPs, hostility to European integration has become the shibboleth of British conservatism. Where do British public and elite opinions lie on this issue?

A British vision for Europe

- Among both opinion-formers and the general public, a less integrated EU than at present was the most popular selection from a choice of future models of integration. Among the general public, 57% would prefer either a less integrated EU or complete British withdrawal. Only 12% support British participation in a more integrated European Union.
- The vast majority of the public – 60% – has no desire for the UK to join the single currency, even in the longer term – a view shared by 39% of opinion-formers (see Figure 6).
- Among Conservative voters, 79% believe Britain should never join the euro. Support for staying outside the single currency was also high among both Labour and Liberal Democrat supporters, at 55% and 48% respectively.

Figure 6: Views on the UK joining the euro

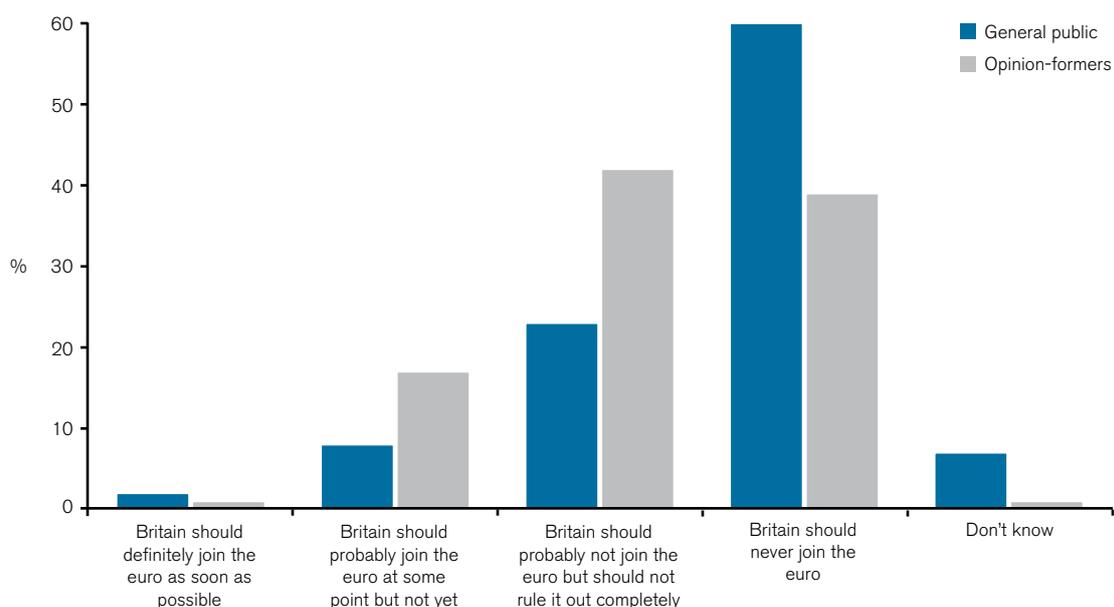
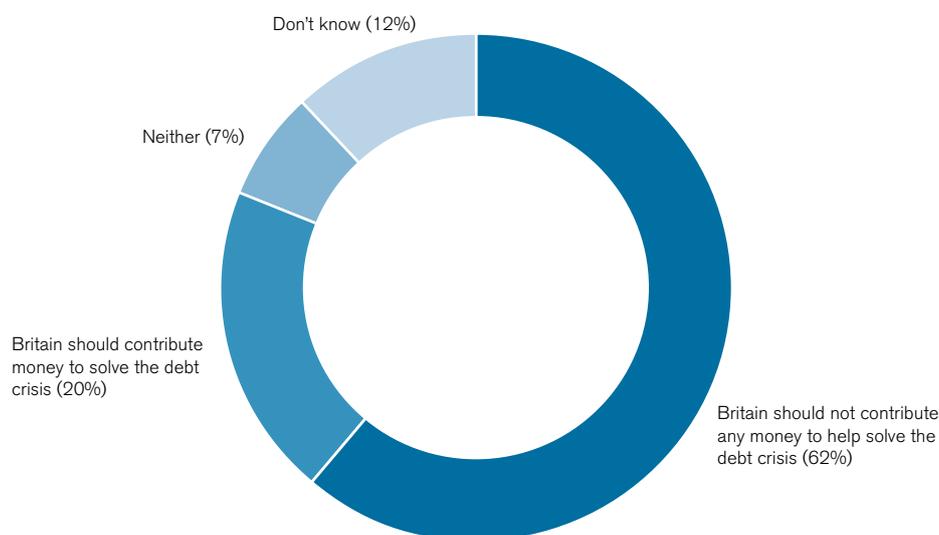


Figure 7: Should Britain help the eurozone? (General public)



- Despite the connections between the UK economy and the eurozone, 62% of the general public felt the UK should focus on its own problems and not contribute money to help solve the debt crisis in the EU. Only 20% felt that it was in the UK's interest to support other EU states financially (see Figure 7).
- Among the general public, 73% are opposed to the idea that the EU should be involved in setting the UK's national budget deficit targets, which could be the outcome if the UK were to join the 'fiscal compact' and the euro; 45% opposed the notion that other EU members should sign up to this requirement as well.
- A high proportion – 68% – of the general public believes that the problems in the eurozone demonstrate the need for the UK to retain independence from the EU, with only 13% believing they should push the UK to build closer ties with its European neighbours.

The advantages and disadvantages of EU membership

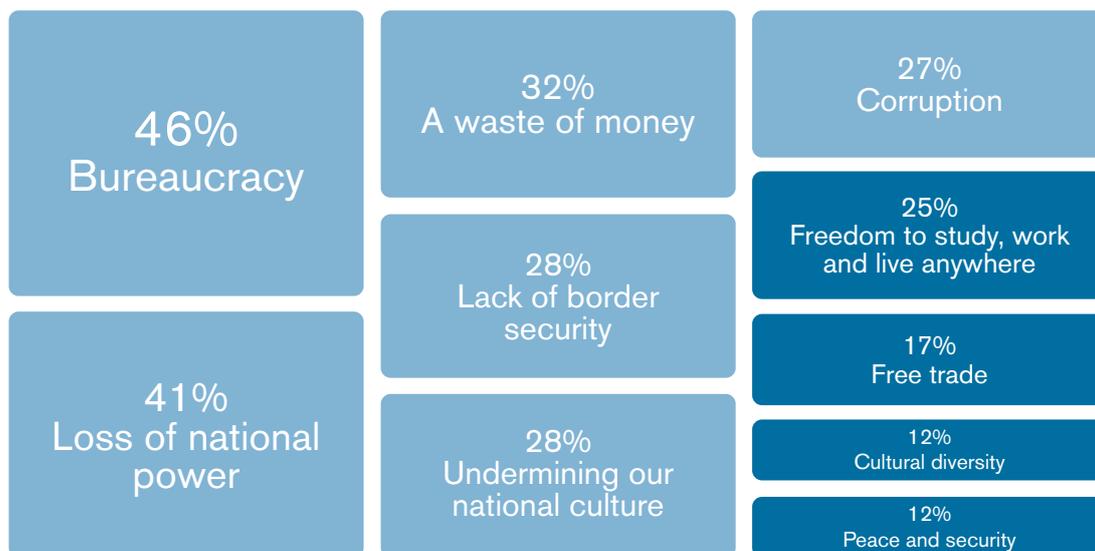
British negativity about today's push for deeper EU integration reflects a fundamental scepticism among the general public about the benefits of EU membership. For most of the last 40 years, successive British governments have taken a pragmatic approach to the country's EU membership, believing that despite frustrations, British interests are better served by being inside than out. However, lacking the emotional attachment of other EU member states to the post-war European integration project, the UK's relationship has always been transactional: do the benefits outweigh the costs?

According to the survey, opinion-formers in the UK take a relatively balanced view of the costs and benefits of EU membership. Their top 10 associations with the EU contain five positive and five negative elements. Among the general public, however, the disadvantages of membership dominate their impressions of the EU. For example:

- 'Bureaucracy' (46%), 'Loss of national power' (41%), and 'A waste of money' (32%) are the most common words and phrases associated with the European Union among the general public (see Figure 8).⁹

⁹ These figures are based on the respondents selecting up to four options.

Figure 8: Ten phrases most associated with the European Union? (General public)

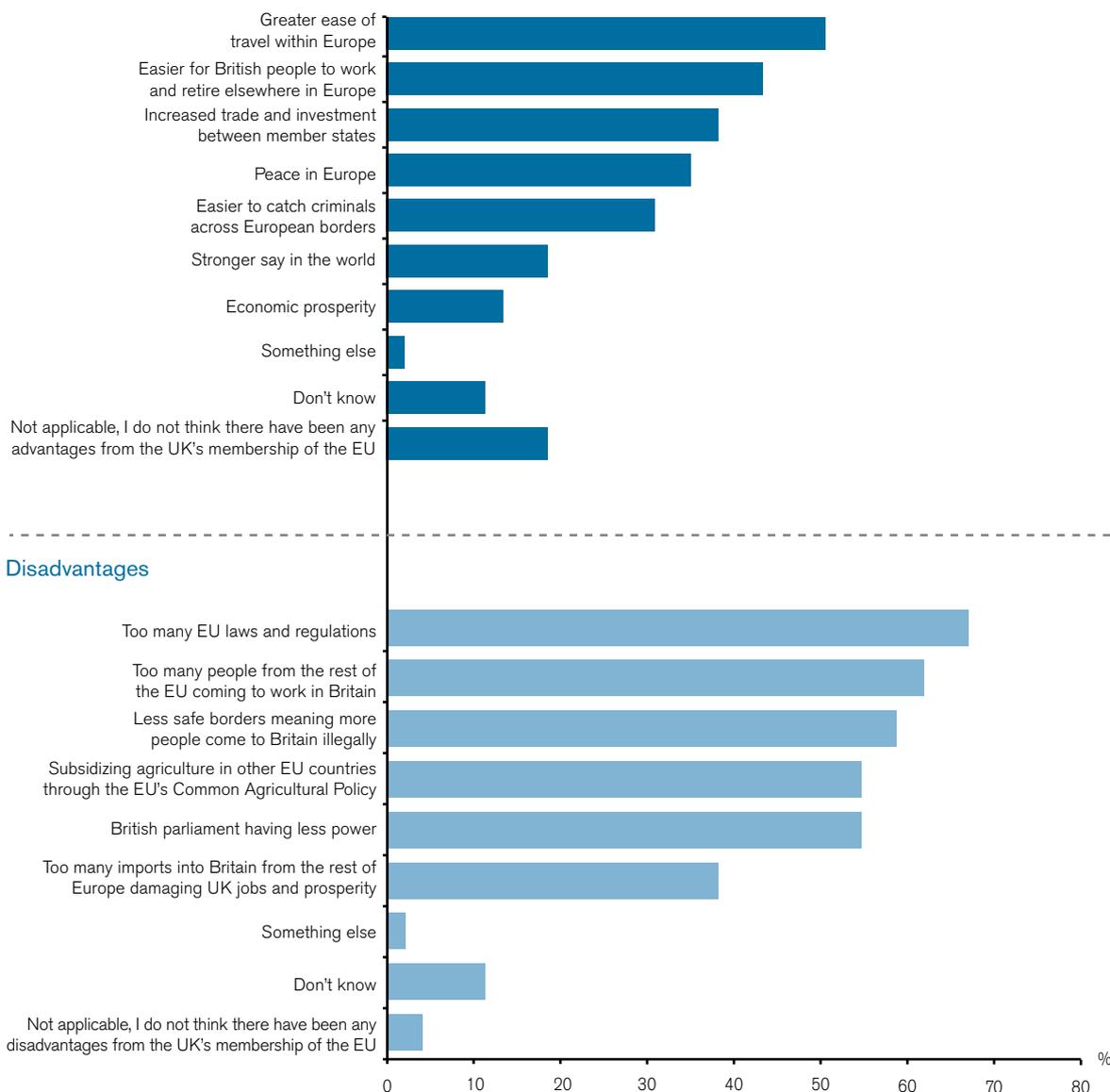


- The highest positive response from the general public was only seventh in the list, with 25% of respondents associating the EU with the freedom to study, live and work anywhere in the EU.
- When asked about the benefits of EU membership, 49% of the general public selected ‘greater ease of travel within Europe’, the most popular response, while 42% highlighted the fact that it was easier to work and retire elsewhere in Europe. However, in a striking inconsistency, 60% of respondents felt that too many people from elsewhere in the EU were coming to work in the UK (see Figure 9).¹⁰
- The logic of collective foreign and defence policies was embraced more by opinion-formers, with 26% associating the EU with peace and security (compared with 12% of the public) and 24% associating the EU with a stronger say in the world (compared with just 7% of the public).
- The benefit of ‘free trade’ was selected by only 17% of the public. It was a much more common association among opinion-formers, 35% of whom believed it was an important benefit of the Union.
- Among the general public, 65% felt there were too many EU laws and regulations. The loss of UK parliamentary power, and EU subsidies for agriculture were also cited as disadvantages of EU membership by 53% of respondents (see Figure 9).
- Older respondents tended to see more disadvantages than younger respondents, in some cases by large margins. While 83% of those over the age of 60 felt that there was too much regulation from Brussels, only 36% of those aged 18–24 agreed.

¹⁰ These figures are based on the respondents selecting all options that applied.

Figure 9: Advantages and disadvantages of European Union membership

Advantages



This negativity towards the EU may be partly due to a lack of knowledge. This year's survey asked people to estimate the size of Britain's net contribution to the EU, after providing details of expenditure in some other areas of government:

- Most of the general public considerably overestimated the UK's net contribution to the EU. The median response was £27 billion, more than three times the actual figure of £8.1 billion.¹¹ The mean response of £74 billion represents an average estimate more than nine times the actual size of the UK's net contribution (see Figure 10).
- These figures seem particularly relevant given that roughly a third of the public associate the EU with being a 'waste of money'. More than 50% of respondents estimated the UK's contribution to be over £20 billion, but even after learning of its real size, 53% still thought the contribution was too high.

11 Based on Office for Budget Responsibility (OBR) estimates. See OBR, 'Transactions with the European Union', *Economic and fiscal outlook supplementary fiscal tables – November 2011*, <http://budgetresponsibility.independent.gov.uk/economic-and-fiscal-outlook-november-2011/>.

Figure 10: Public estimates of the government's net contribution to the European Union in 2010–11



The UK's future in Europe

It is not surprising that there is increasing discussion of the idea of holding a referendum on future UK membership of the EU. Compounding these broadly negative public attitudes towards the EU is the new fear that a more integrated eurozone could somehow disadvantage the UK. Conservative backbenchers, in particular, are now demanding that, at the very least, the government follow through on its pledge to negotiate a repatriation of certain EU powers to the UK parliament.¹² A referendum on the UK's EU membership would be needed if other EU governments rejected this request, or simply if the EU pushed forward with a form of integration that might threaten the UK's status within the Single Market. The survey revealed the extent to which calling, or even committing to call a referendum on Britain's EU membership could develop the momentum for a UK exit from the EU.

- When a range of options for future European integration was presented, the most popular vision for the future of Europe – with 31% – was of a less integrated EU, amounting to little more than a free trade area. This was a more popular choice than withdrawing from the EU altogether, an option selected by 26% of the general public.
- However, when given the choice, 57% of the public said they would support a referendum on whether the UK should remain a member of the European Union. This compared with just 42% of opinion-formers, the majority of whom, 53%, oppose a referendum (see Figures 11a and 12a).
- Among the general public, support for a referendum did not just come from Conservative voters. Of those who voted in the 2010 general election, almost half of Labour voters and 53% of Liberal Democrats supported a referendum.
- Support for a referendum rose markedly with age, with 70% of those aged 60 and over favouring a public say on membership.
- If a referendum were held, 49% of the general public said they would vote to leave the EU, with only 30% saying they would vote to remain a member; 16% are undecided. In stark contrast 63% of opinion-formers said they would vote to remain in the EU, and only 27% said they would vote to leave (see Figures 11b and 12b).

¹² See for example the speeches of Eurosceptic MPs such as David Nuttall MP and John Redwood MP during the parliamentary debate on a referendum, 24 October 2011, <http://www.publications.parliament.uk/pa/cm201011/cmhansrd/cm111024/debtext/111024-0002.htm#1110247000001>; and Dr Liam Fox, 'Life outside the EU holds no terror', speech to the Taxpayers' Alliance, St Stephen's Club, Westminster, 2 July 2012, <http://www.taxpayersalliance.com/home/2012/07/liam-fox-britain-euro-european-union-speech.html>. In addition, the People's Pledge Campaign, calling for a referendum on EU membership, has received over 100,000 signatures and the support of both Labour and Conservative MPs. Prime Minister David Cameron recently provided a formal statement of his own views; see David Cameron, 'We need to be clear about the best way of getting what is best for Britain', *Daily Telegraph*, 30 June 2012, <http://www.telegraph.co.uk/news/politics/david-cameron/9367479/David-Cameron-We-need-to-be-clear-about-the-best-way-of-getting-what-is-best-for-Britain.html>.

Figure 11a: Should the government commit to holding a referendum on whether the UK should remain a member of the European Union? (General public)

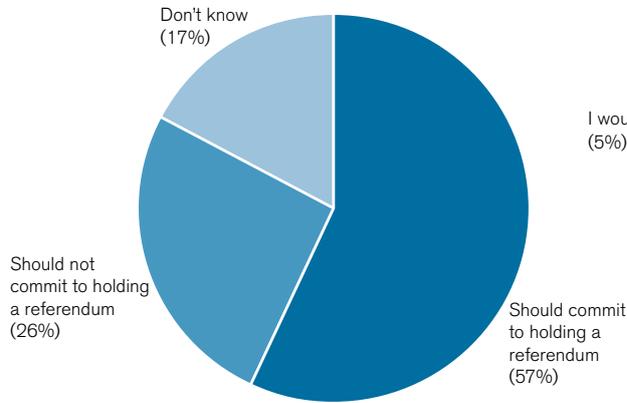


Figure 11b: How would you vote in a referendum on the UK's membership of the European Union? (General public)

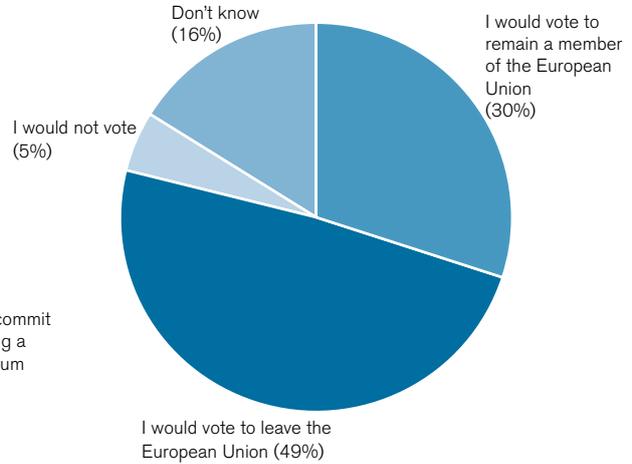
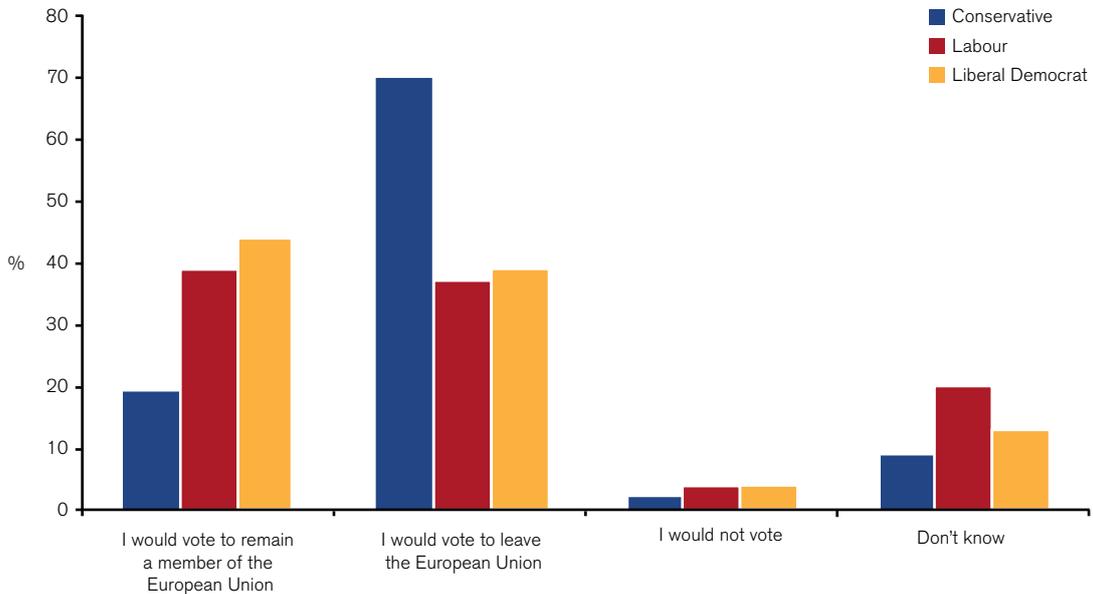


Figure 11c: How would you vote in a referendum on the UK's membership of the European Union? (General public)



Note: This figure uses '2010 vote' data rather than 'Voting intention'.

- Support for leaving the EU is highest among Conservatives and those over the age of 60 (see Figures 11c and 12c). However, the correlation with age is particularly marked. More voters aged 18–24 would vote to remain in the EU than would vote to leave, and the difference between support for membership between the youngest and oldest groups polled is 31 percentage points.
- Scotland was the most pro-European area in the UK, with 40% of the public supporting membership of the EU, although 41% would still vote to leave. Support was lowest in the Midlands and Wales, with only 26% in favour of EU membership.

Figure 12a: Should the government commit to holding a referendum on whether the UK should remain a member of the European Union? (Opinion-formers)

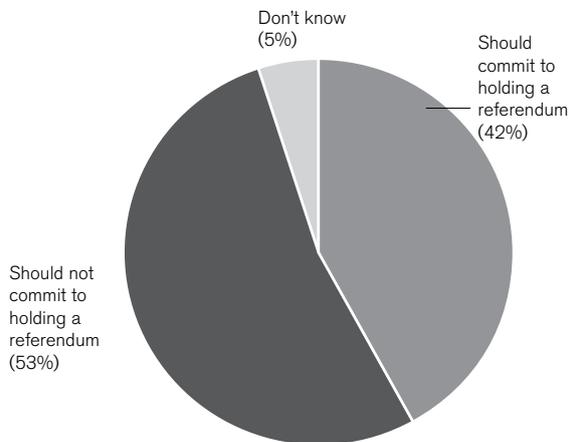


Figure 12b: How would you vote in a referendum on the UK's membership of the European Union? (Opinion-formers)

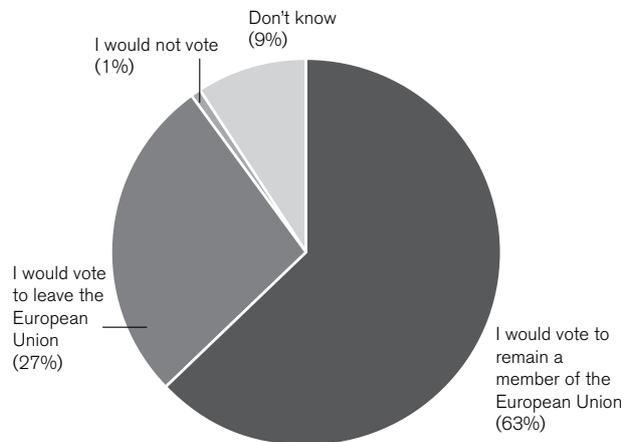
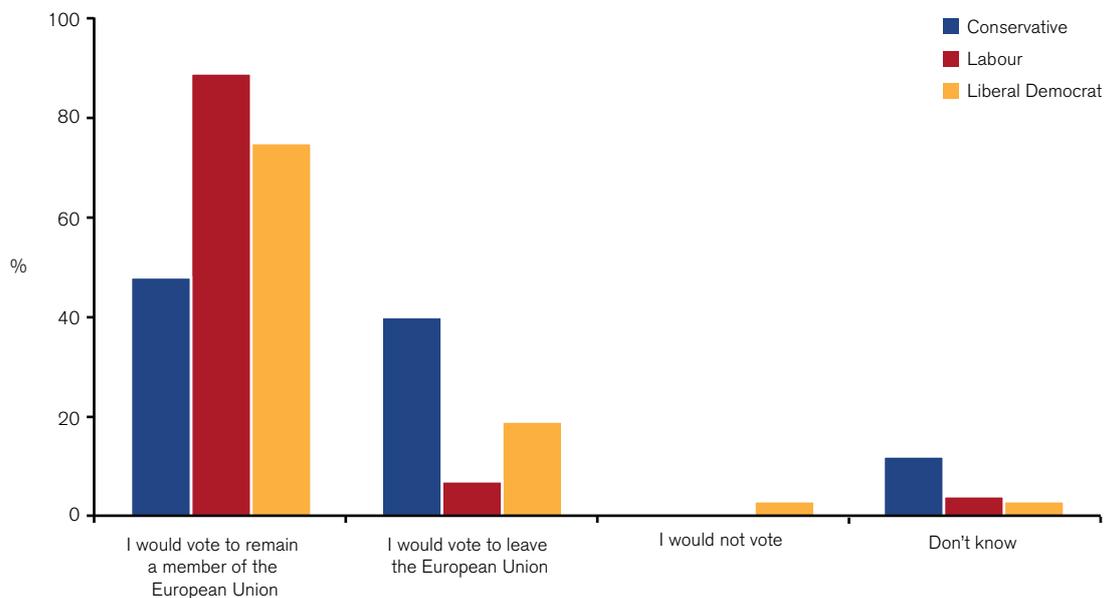


Figure 12c: How would you vote in a referendum on the UK's membership of the European Union? (Opinion-formers)



Note: This figure uses 'Voting intention' data.

Cooperation with the EU

Despite the high levels of support for leaving the EU, there was still a widespread belief, as in 2011, that the UK should work closely with the EU across a range of issues. The general public appears to hold the view that the EU is bureaucratic, wasteful and a constraint on UK independence alongside recognition of the value of working with other EU countries on issues where the UK has limited capacity to shape international policy agendas on its own.

- When asked about how closely the UK should work with the EU in a range of seven policy areas, a sizeable majority of people supported the UK working ‘very closely’ or ‘fairly closely’ in every area of policy that was polled.
- Support was particularly high for working closely with the EU on counter-terrorism, policing and border security (77%) and on illegal migration (70%).
- There was higher support for working with the EU than the US in every area of policy polled apart from defence and security.
- Among opinion-formers, 46% believed that the UK’s closest ties should be with the EU, with only 17% selecting the emerging economies.

The British public is generally sceptical towards the EU. Many say they would like to vote on their membership, and, at the moment, many claim they would vote to leave. But the logic of cooperation with European neighbours in a world of global challenges also remains compelling to many of the general public as well as to opinion-formers. The question is whether the UK will be able to have its cake and eat it when it comes to the EU.

Uncertainties over the UK’s referendum debate

Dr Robin Niblett

Director, Chatham House

The debate about the UK’s membership of the EU is likely to be a central theme of British politics in the coming year. In October 2011, a motion in the House of Commons that called for a referendum on British membership of the EU gained the support of 81 Conservative MPs voting against the instructions of party whips, the largest ever Conservative rebellion on Europe.¹³ Senior figures in the Conservative Party such as former Defence Secretary Liam Fox have openly endorsed calls for a referendum, while Prime Minister David Cameron has cautiously accepted that the case for a referendum on Europe could be made, although he does not believe the time is right.¹⁴

The turmoil within the eurozone has served to intensify the debate about Britain’s place within Europe. As the countries that use the single currency move towards some form of full fiscal union, the pressure among Conservative activists for the government to offer the British people a renewed democratic mandate on EU membership is likely to grow. At the same time, the continuing popularity of the UK Independence Party (UKIP), whose political platform is built around its opposition to Britain’s membership of the EU, creates concerns among Conservatives that voters with strongly Eurosceptic views are being drawn away from the party.

The survey demonstrates growing public desire for a referendum and, within the context of a referendum, 49% of respondents said they would vote to leave the EU. However, the desire for a referendum should not simply be considered as a proxy measurement of Euroscepticism. Prominent pro-Europeans, including Peter Mandelson, a former European Commissioner as well as senior Labour minister, and Jon Cruddas, the head of Labour’s current policy review, have suggested that a referendum is the best way to build a national consensus behind the UK’s membership and future relations with the EU. Both have urged the Labour Party to support such a move.¹⁵ The survey also shows that among both Labour and Liberal Democrat voters, more would currently vote to remain in the EU than to leave (39%–37% for Labour; 44%–39% for Liberal Democrats), potentially making any referendum outcome more uncertain than the gross numbers might imply.

13 ‘EU Referendum: Rebels Lose Vote in Commons’, BBC News, 25 October 2011, <http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-politics-15425256>.

14 Liam Fox, ‘Life outside the EU holds no terror’; David Cameron, ‘We need to be clear about the best way of getting what is best for Britain’.

15 Peter Mandelson, ‘Europe, is it the end of the project?’, Annual Hands Lecture, Mansfield College, Oxford, 4 May 2012, http://media.podcasts.ox.ac.uk/mans/all/2012-05-04_mandelson.pdf; John Cruddas on the EU Referendum, 28 October 2011, <http://www.joncruddas.org.uk/jon-cruddas-eu-referendum>; ‘Ed Miliband’s new policy chief backs a vote on Europe’, *Daily Telegraph*, 15 May 2012.

In addition, it is interesting to note that, in a question laying out a variety of options for further European integration, a plurality – 31% – opted for the idea of the UK remaining in a less integrated EU, against 26% who saw leaving the EU as their preferred option. This means that, when given a broader choice than in or out, only a quarter of the public said they would actually choose to leave.

Much would come down, therefore, to the timing and phrasing of any referendum. If it followed a successful negotiation about the position the UK would enjoy outside the eurozone but still inside the Single Market (after a repatriation of some competencies or with additional safeguards for the UK), then a vote to stay in might win the day. But, if a referendum were held as a matter of ideological principle or political expedience prior to a serious negotiation and reduced to a simple 'in/out' choice, then the survey indicates that a majority of the British public might choose to leave. There is also a strong possibility that other EU member states might not be minded to negotiate concessions to keep the UK inside the EU, leaving opponents of UK membership with a strong case to argue for a negative answer to a straight 'in/out' choice.

It is worth noting, in this case, the strong view of opinion-formers concerning the UK's future membership of the EU. If a referendum were held, some 89% of opinion-formers intending to vote Labour, 75% voting Liberal Democrat and nearly 50% voting Conservative said they would choose to stay in the EU. Do they know something the public does not? And if so, could they make the case convincingly for Britain staying in the EU against the likely media onslaught for a British exit?

Delusions of sovereignty: there is no opt-out from globalization, even for Britain

Dr Constanze Stelzenmüller

Senior Transatlantic Fellow, German Marshall Fund of the United States

Granted, the euro crisis has us all baffled and tied in knots; but Britain appears to be even more confused and contorted than most. If we understand Prime Minister David Cameron's government correctly, the following are all current UK policy positions: 1) Europe's salvation lies in further integration towards a fiscal union; but 2) Britain will not be a part of this. 3) Britain will hold a referendum on its EU membership but 4) not now. 5) Scotland will vote in 2014 on whether it wishes to belong to the Union (the other one), but 6) it really ought to stay. In sum, and just to make sure we have this straight: Britain will be stronger without the EU – or at least by standing aloof from a more federated Europe; whereas Scotland will be a lot worse off without the Union.

This latest YouGov poll confirms that the, let's call it ambiguity, of British government policy actually faithfully reflects the attitudes of its voters. Britain has been a member of the EU for 37 years, 40% of its trade goes to the eurozone, and its legal system (not least its civil rights and freedoms) is tightly woven into the living fabric of European law. Yet the views expressed by the respondents suggest that a majority of Britons continue to see themselves as denizens of a sovereign island realm firmly anchored in the mid-Atlantic and beholden to absolutely no one – and certainly not the European Union. When asked which countries they feel most favourable towards (and most of us like people we think are Like Us), Britons said they feel closest to countries such as the Netherlands, Ireland, Sweden and Norway: hardy Northerners used to withstanding the onslaught of wind, water, Vikings and Brussels. (Note that the Scots fit right in.) Interestingly for us Continentals who still think of Britain as one of the Big Three powers in Europe (these days, it's probably the Big Four, with Poland), all of these are also rather small countries, in terms of power as much as size. In fact, France, Germany, and Poland top the list of countries Britons *don't* like, just behind Russia and Ukraine. This does not bode well for European foreign policy coordination in the future, whether with Britain in the EU or out of it.

The notion that the EU might be or become a leading power in the world is rejected absolutely; in all fairness, even the most diehard Euro-optimist finds that difficult to imagine these days. But the idea that EU membership is in the UK's national interest is rejected almost as roundly; the list of negatives associated with the EU is far longer than the positives. So what *does* serve the national interest? The armed forces, the BBC World service, and the intelligence services top the list – higher than UK companies, diplomats and overseas aid. On this count at least, it appears the days of Rudyard Kipling, John Buchan and 007 are still with us – at least in the mind of the British public. No wonder, then, that fiscal union, or at least a more integrated EU (the goal now pursued by Germany, France and a number of other member states), is given short shrift by all but a tiny minority. Nearly two-thirds of respondents want a referendum commitment now, and 49% would vote to leave.

Still, that last number is revealing: it shows that Britons remain less persuaded by Euroscepticism than one might think (indeed, 30% would vote to stay, and only 26% want a complete UK withdrawal!). And despite (or perhaps precisely because of) the fact that China is thought by most respondents to be the world's next leading power, only a fifth said Britain should harness its fate to such emerging countries; the United States and the EU remain clear front-runners. Remarkably, between two-thirds and three-quarters said Britain should work with the rest of the European Union on issues from energy and climate policy via trade, border security, foreign, defence and security policy to relations with key emerging economies. When the same questions are asked with regard to the United States, the EU wins out on all counts except defence and security policy (but even there with only a narrow 2% lead for the US). This poll certainly does not support MP Douglas Carswell's allegation that Britons feel they are 'shackled to a corpse'. Even more importantly, Britons understand the key consequence of globalization after all: cooperation and multilateralism trump bilateralism or 'going it alone'. The mystery is why they think this would be easier from outside the EU than from within.

Presumably, the logic behind this conviction is the one articulated by some of the Conservative Eurosceptics: Britain could, like Switzerland or Norway, enjoy the benefits of closeness to the EU without any of the obligations. This rosy vision fails to take into account that Norway's oil and gas resources give it a leverage that would elude an economically troubled Britain. Meanwhile, Swiss diplomats, if guaranteed strict anonymity, would be likely to acknowledge that their country's situation is better described as *de facto* membership without any of the rights. Surely that cannot be what Britain wants either.

In reality, of course, Britain and the EU need each other. The EU needs Britain as a full and confident member, and as a champion of political and economic liberalism; Britain needs the EU for leverage and, yes, protection against the storms of globalization. Indeed, it might be thought that the YouGov respondents' fondness for the Netherlands or Ireland reflects a rather accurate understanding of what a Britain outside the EU would be like: a much smaller country. (And that would be including Scotland.)

4 An Island Alone? Pillars of a More Independent Foreign Policy

If the UK is not certain that its future lies within the European Union, then what are the other key channels through which it can promote its international interests? Does the UK have the will and capacity to play a distinctive role from the EU and US internationally? Whom should it work with, and through what channels should it work?

Attempting to articulate the UK's role in the world is a familiar theme for British politicians. Prime ministers and foreign secretaries have in recent years frequently sought to counteract a narrative of gradual, relative decline with a confident vision of a UK foreign policy endowed with unique assets: close ties and influence on both sides of the Atlantic; a privileged position in international institutions; a still capable and significant military; a global financial centre with an advantageous time zone; and cultural and social institutions such as the BBC, British universities and the UK legal system – all essential aspects of the UK's soft power.¹⁶ But key choices remain. Can this somewhat singular vision be achieved when the pressure on UK public resources is so high? The survey highlights the contradiction between popular goals and the capacity to achieve them.

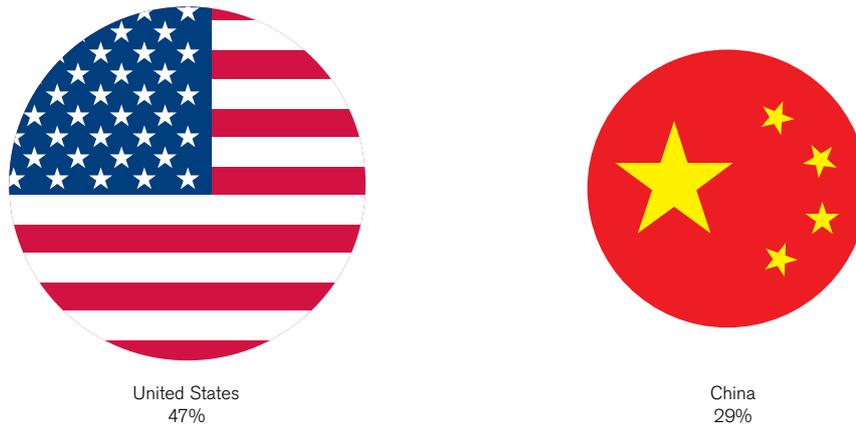
Britain in the world

- The British people seem increasingly aware of the changing distribution of international power, and that this shift may come at the expense of the UK and its traditional allies in the West.
- The United States is still regarded by 47% of the general public as the world's leading power at present, with 29% selecting China. However, 46% believe that China will be the world's leading power in 20 years' time (see Figures 13a and 13b). Opinion-formers are in agreement with the general public, although they are even clearer in their views, with 72% believing that the US is still the world's leading power and 60% sharing the public's assessment of China's future leading position.¹⁷
- Still, a majority of the general public – 56% – believe that the UK should aspire to be a 'great power'. Only 25% believe that the UK should accept a diminished role internationally. Even among opinion-formers, 55% share the public's belief in an ambitious international role for the UK (see Figure 14).

¹⁶ For a detailed consideration of the narratives of exceptionalism and decline which have permeated British foreign policy for much of the post-Second World War era, see Michael Harvey, *Perspectives on the UK's Place in the World* (London: Chatham House, 2011).

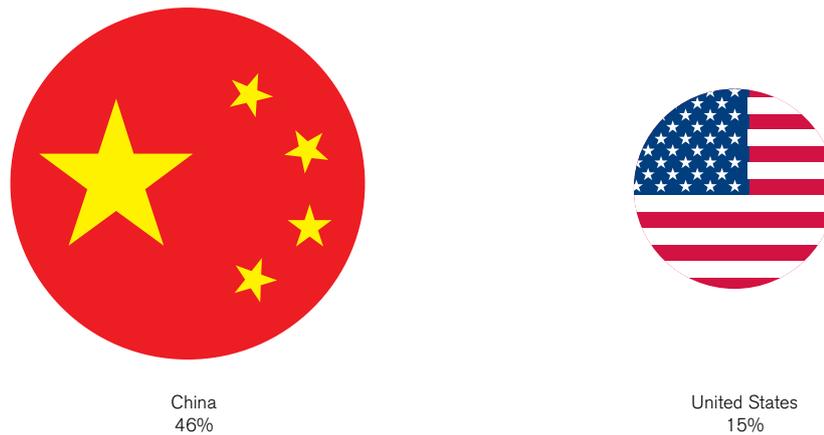
¹⁷ These views are closely aligned with recent public opinion polling in the United States. See, for example, the national NBC/Wall Street Journal Poll of 1,000 registered voters, conducted 13–17 January 2011, <http://blogs.wsj.com/economics/2011/01/19/wsjnbc-poll-us-losing-ground-to-china/>.

Figure 13a: Which is the world's leading power today? (General public)



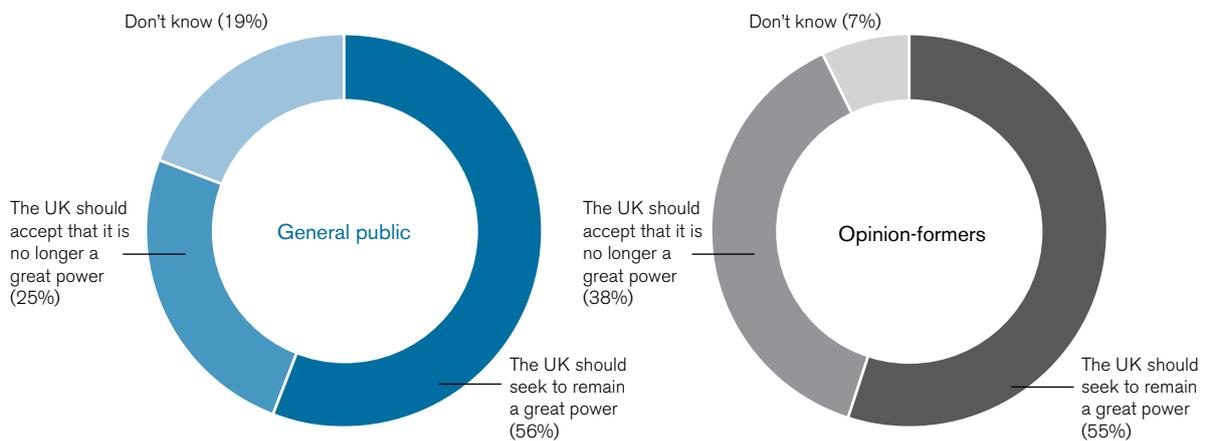
Note: Only the top two responses to each question have been included in this figure.

Figure 13b: Which will be the world's leading power in 20 years' time? (General public)



Note: Only the top two responses to each question have been included in this figure.

Figure 14: Should the UK seek to remain a great power?



Foreign policy assets

Support for an ambitious foreign policy raises the question of what capabilities the public believes the UK possesses to sustain its international position. It is also not clear how aware the public is of the impact of government spending cuts on the institutions that promote British foreign policy.

- When presented with a list of seven different options, 43% of the general public believe the UK's armed forces do the most to promote Britain's interests internationally. This is the third year in a row in which the military has come top. Although there has been a modest decline in support from a peak of 53% in 2011 (perhaps owing to the active intervention in Libya at the time of last year's survey), support remains robust, especially among older respondents.¹⁸
- Only 27% of opinion-formers, however, considered the military a leading channel of UK influence, behind the BBC World Service, UK businesses, diplomats and the intelligence services. British business is regarded particularly well by opinion-formers in terms of influence, coming second behind the World Service and with support increasing to 41% from 29% a year ago;
- Notably, opinion-formers overwhelmingly (with 68%) believe the BBC World Service is the UK's most important foreign policy asset. The World Service was also ranked second by the public.
- The UK's membership of the EU, development spending and the activities of the British Council were the least valued foreign policy assets by both opinion-formers and the general public. The British Council would perhaps be expected to come low on the public list, given that the bulk of its work is conducted abroad with a relatively low domestic public profile. The figures for development warrant further consideration.

International development – spending and priorities

The UK's spending on international development has moved in the opposite direction to almost every other area of government expenditure, as the UK steadily raises its aid budget to meet its target of spending 0.7% of gross national income (GNI) on overseas development assistance. However, as in previous years, most of the general public believe development spending is too high and should be reduced.

- A majority of the public – 56% – felt that the UK should give 'not very much' aid, or none at all; 34% felt the UK should give a fair amount. Conservatives were most in favour of reducing the level of aid spending, while Liberal Democrats were most supportive of it (see Figure 15).
- In contrast, opinion-formers tended to be far more supportive of development assistance, with the majority – 55% – believing the UK should give a 'fair amount'. Just 6% felt the UK should not spend anything on international aid.

However, these figures obscure a lack of general knowledge about the level of UK expenditure on overseas aid. When presented with the figure for total government expenditure, and figures for total spending on health, education, defence and energy and climate change, much of the public significantly overestimates the UK overseas aid budget.

- The mean estimate of UK expenditure on international development was £79 billion, with the median response of £20 billion still more than double the actual figure. A quarter of the public estimated aid expenditure to be over £100 billion (see Figure 16).

18 These figures are based on the respondents selecting up to three options.

Figure 15: How much overseas aid should the British government give?

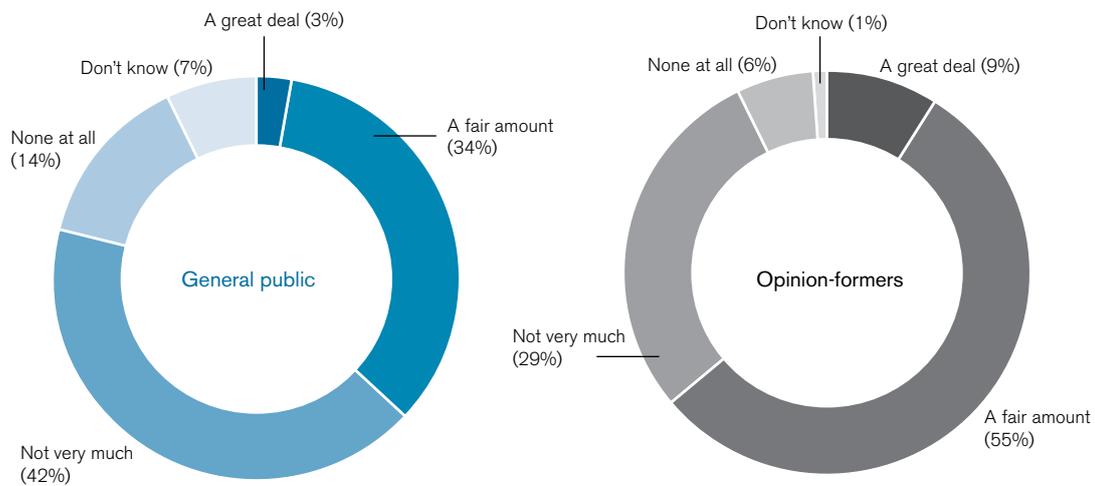


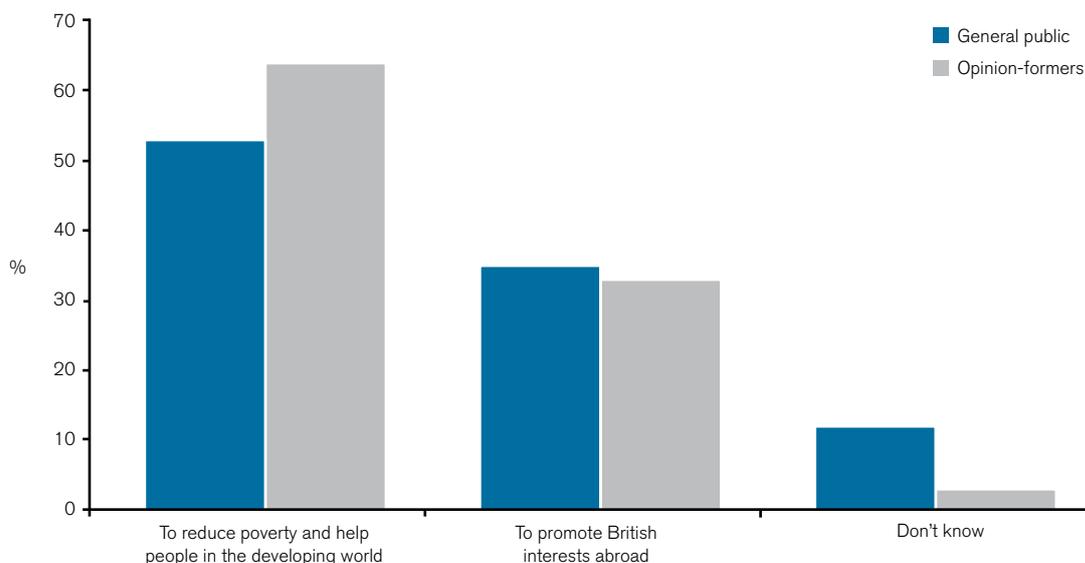
Figure 16: Public estimates of government expenditure on overseas aid in 2010–11



- When informed of UK development spending in real terms, 61% of the general public still felt it was too much. However, when this number was presented as a proportion of overall government expenditure, the figure believing it should be cut fell markedly to 45%.¹⁹
- In addition, despite a general tendency to support the promotion of the national interest to the exclusion of ethical concerns in the rest of the survey responses, a majority of both the general public (53%) and opinion-formers (64%) believe that aid should be used principally to reduce poverty rather than purely to promote British interests (see Figure 17).

¹⁹ Half of the general public respondents were presented with spending in real terms, and half were presented with spending as a proportion of national income.

Figure 17: What should be the priority of overseas aid?



Can the coalition government fulfil its commitments on aid?

Rob Bailey

Senior Research Fellow, Energy, Environment and Resources

There is one notable exception to the otherwise pervasive cuts being implemented across Whitehall. Next year, British overseas aid is set to rise from its current level of 0.56% of GNI to the internationally accepted target for industrialized countries of 0.7%, placing the UK among a select club of donor nations to reach a commitment first made in 1970. The target, originally set by the previous Labour government, featured in the manifestos of both the Liberal Democrats and the Conservatives during the 2010 general election; the 'Coalition Agreement' pledged to enshrine it in law. But two years of economic stagnation and fiscal austerity have seen support decline within one side of the coalition. While the Liberal Democrats remain committed to the 0.7% target, it has been widely criticized within the conservative press while dissenting voices have emerged among Conservative MPs on the front and back benches.

This survey demonstrates that the UK public tends to overestimate the aid budget – the average estimate was £79 billion.²⁰ This amount is a little more than education spending and just over 8% of total government expenditure – considerably more than the £8.5 billion actually spent. A significant overestimate – though not compared to the United States, where one recent survey found the average American estimated 27% of the federal budget was consumed by aid (in fact it is 1%).²¹ The median response, less skewed by extreme overestimates, was £20 billion.

²⁰ This calculation includes respondents who answered that aid accounts for 100% of government expenditure, although this is clearly erroneous.

²¹ See Kaiser Family Foundation, *U.S. Global Health Policy: 2012 Survey of Americans on the U.S. Role in Global Health* (Menlo Park: Kaiser Family Foundation, 2012), <http://www.kff.org/kaiserpolls/upload/8304.pdf>.

However, the fact that most people imagine an inflated aid budget does not mean that informing the public of its actual size will build support for higher spending. When subsequently presented with the actual figure, the majority of respondents (61%) still felt the UK gives 'too much' aid, despite its being considerably less than most had imagined.²² On the question of how much is not 'too much', the most popular answer is 'about the same as other wealthy countries' – currently about 0.46% of GNI.²³ But most – 50% – believe the UK should give 'less' or 'none at all'. This view does not extend to opinion-formers, 68% of whom think the UK should give 'about the same' as other wealthy countries; only 21% think 'less' or 'none at all'.

The public has a good sense of how UK aid spending compares with that of other countries: people of all voting persuasions tend to think the UK is a more generous donor than West European countries such as France and Germany or other rich countries such as the US and Japan. They are right: in 2011, France and Germany gave 0.46% and 0.40% of GNI and the US and Japan only 0.20% and 0.18%, respectively.²⁴

Support for aid is closely aligned to voting intention. The belief that £8.5bn is 'too much' was least pronounced among Liberal Democrat voters (42%) and most pronounced among Conservative voters (76%). This divergence increases as the questions turn to how much aid the UK should give: 60% of Liberal Democrat voters selected 'about the same' as other wealthy countries, compared with 41% of Conservatives; 54% of Conservative voters and only 31% of Liberal Democrats believe it should be 'less' or 'none at all'. This divergence is less pronounced among opinion-formers, particularly Labour voters, who are uniformly more supportive of aid.²⁵

The widespread belief that the UK spends too much on aid presents an obvious challenge for Andrew Mitchell, Secretary of State for International Development. He faces a tough fight to defend his rising budget while those of his cabinet colleagues shrink. Tellingly, the government has chosen not to legislate on the 0.7% target in the coming year, but quietly dropping it would be impossible: not only would it divide the coalition, it would draw serious criticism from development groups in the year the G8 returns to Britain for the first time since Gleneagles and the 'Make Poverty History' campaign in 2005. It would also be embarrassing for the prime minister, who will co-chair the UN High Level Panel on the Post-2015 Agenda, tasked with identifying what should follow the Millennium Development Goals.

The question for the government then is how best to manage public perceptions as the spending increase is implemented. The survey provides some clues. Few people believe aid does much to serve Britain's interests around the world: it comes sixth in a list of eight channels of UK influence.²⁶ However, the survey indicates that the public could be persuaded otherwise. Overseas aid could arguably help achieve many of the objectives the public wishes to see prioritized within British foreign policy. Tackling poverty, inequality, unemployment and marginalization in poor countries could be one part of a counter-terrorism strategy – the public's number one priority. Stimulating economic development could help create new markets for the UK, promoting British trade overseas. Supporting agricultural development in sub-Saharan Africa would not only address poverty and hunger in Africa, but boost and diversify global food production, enhancing the UK's food security in the process (ensuring the supply of vital resources such as oil, gas, food and water was ranked third). Add these to the still considerable cumulative support for primary aid objectives such as poverty reduction, combating disease, tackling climate change and improving governance and human rights, and the government has a clear agenda for aid that should garner broad support.

22 It is important to note that there were differences in general public responses to this question, based on the fact that half of the respondents were presented with spending in real terms, and half were presented with spending as a proportion of national income.

23 This figure represents the 2011 average among OECD countries. See OECD, 'Net Official Development Assistance from DAC and other OECD Members in 2011'; <http://www.oecd.org/dataoecd/44/13/50060310.pdf>.

24 Ibid.

25 The percentages in this paragraph are for 'Voting intention' rather than '2010 vote'.

26 From a list of channels through which Britain projects influence, aid came near the bottom when respondents were asked to identify which do most to serve UK interests around the world. Tellingly, the percentage of people selecting aid is in decline: falling from 21% in 2010 to only 11% in 2012. The same trend was apparent among opinion-formers.

Mr Mitchell appears to have been on the right lines when he recently described UK aid as an investment in stability and future generations' prosperity. This 'enlightened self-interest' narrative is also more likely to resonate with his core constituencies, with Conservative voters more likely to believe that aid should be provided to promote British interests. Mr Mitchell will be wary of taking this line of argument much further, however: it is one thing to argue that reducing poverty and helping people in the developing world can serve British interests, but it is another to argue that the primary purpose of aid should be to serve British interests, with all other objectives secondary to this. The British public believes the primary purpose of aid should be to reduce poverty and help people in the developing world. But on the international stage, an aid policy seen as self-serving will tarnish the UK's reputation as a leading donor – entirely defeating the purpose of the 0.7% commitment – and erode Britain's soft power in the process.

Allies and partners

The coalition's vision for a more independent UK foreign policy is predicated on the UK deepening its relations with emerging powers and reinvigorating traditional alliances, including with the US and Commonwealth members. This approach appears to find support from the survey respondents.

- Traditional allies such as Australia, Canada and the US receive the most favourable opinions from the British public in a ranking of favourability of major states outside of Europe, although these impressions tend to decline significantly among younger respondents (see Table 1, page 26).²⁷
- Favourable views of the US have increased significantly since the first Chatham House–YouGov survey in 2010, rising from 20% to 34% in 2012. Unfavourable views of the US have fallen over the same period, from 17% to 8%. In the UK at least, it appears that the Obama administration has been successful in repairing America's international image over the course of its term.
- Moreover, there is public support for the UK's close ties with America. With 29% of respondents in the general public, the US was the most popular choice for the UK's closest ties. Conservatives in particular have strong Atlanticist instincts across the board.

Use of military force

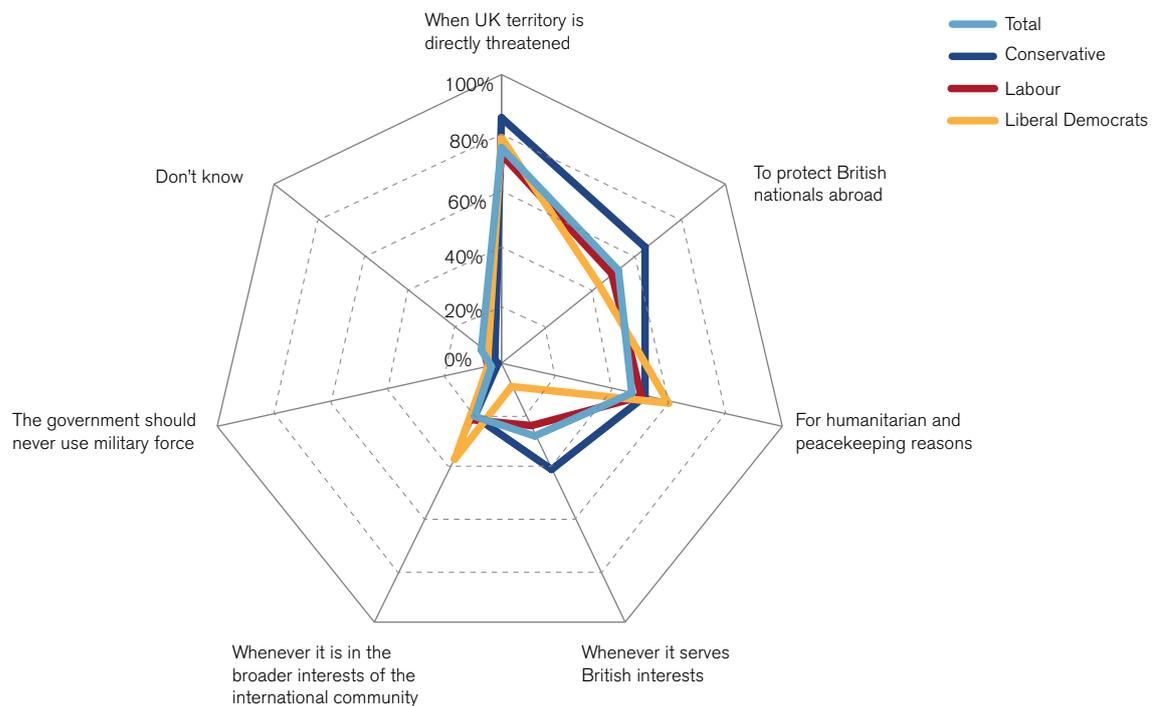
Britain's armed forces are a defining element of the country's international profile. In just the last year, they have continued to be actively involved in Afghanistan, as well as contributing to the coalition air campaign in Libya. At the same time, following the Strategic Defence and Security Review in 2010, biting budget cuts across the MoD are forcing reluctant retrenchment across all three services. The restructuring of the army, announced in July 2012, was a clear illustration of these cuts. And, although the Libya campaign showed a degree of British political leadership, it also demonstrated the limited capacity of European powers to conduct the military campaign without significant American support.

- The survey suggests that there is considerable support for expeditionary activities: 52% of the public believe the government should use military force to protect British nationals abroad, while 47% support the use of force for humanitarian and peacekeeping reasons (see Figure 18).²⁸

²⁷ These figures are based on the respondents selecting up to five options.

²⁸ These figures are based on the respondents selecting all options that applied.

Figure 18: When should the UK use military force? (General public)



Note: This figure uses 'Voting intention' data.

- However, this expeditionary ambition, which chimes with the broad support for the UK aiming to remain a great power, appears to clash with attitudes to particular operations. For example, 43% of the public believe that the UK should not be involved in intervening in or supporting domestic uprisings, such as in Libya or Syria. Fewer than one in four thought the UK had a moral responsibility to support such movements.
- Similarly, 45% of respondents said they are opposed to military action against Iran, with 36% stating they are supportive. British public opinion has barely moved on this issue since 2010. Consistently, a slightly higher proportion tends to oppose rather than support such action, although the public is relatively evenly split.
- Among the general public, 75% support the use of military force when UK territory is directly threatened, although this view does not seem to extend completely to the case of the Falkland Islands. In separate polling by YouGov in April 2012, 42% of the public supported military action to defend the islands while 39% were opposed.²⁹ Notably, Argentina's unfavourable rating in the Chatham House–YouGov survey has increased from 9% to 29% between 2011 and 2012. This is presumably linked to the heightened tensions surrounding the 30th anniversary of the Falklands War.

²⁹ YouGov/Ibarómetro – Falklands/Malvinas Survey of 1,744 GB adults contacted online between 2–3 April 2012. The figures have been weighted and are representative of all GB adults (aged 18+). See http://d25d2506sfb94s.cloudfront.net/cumulus_uploads/document/fjcjgj8uaj/YG-Archives-YGIbarometro-FalklandResults-100412-Summary_WLogo_corrected.pdf.

Table 1: General public attitudes towards other countries

Ranking	Which of the following countries, if any, do you feel especially FAVOURABLE towards? (Please tick up to five.)*	%	Ranking	And which of the following countries, if any, do you feel especially UNFAVOURABLE towards? (Please tick up to five.)	%
1	Netherlands	24	1	Russia	30
2	Ireland	23	2	Ukraine	23
3	Sweden	21	3	France	20
4	Norway	20	4	Greece	20
5	Spain	18	5	Germany	18
6	France	18	6	Poland	15
7	Italy	17	7	Turkey	14
8	Germany	17	8	Spain	10
9	Portugal	10	9	Croatia	7
10	Greece	8	10	Italy	7
11	Turkey	5	11	Czech Republic	5
12	Croatia	5	12	Ireland	5
13	Czech Republic	5	13	Portugal	4
14	Poland	4	14	Norway	1
15	Russia	2	15	Netherlands	0
16	Ukraine	1	16	Sweden	0
17	None of them	25	17	None of them	30
18	Don't know	8	18	Don't know	7
Ranking	Which of the following countries, if any, do you feel especially FAVOURABLE towards? (Please tick up to five.)	%	Ranking	And which of the following countries, if any, do you feel especially UNFAVOURABLE towards? (Please tick up to five.)	%
1	Australia	44	1	Iran	45
2	Canada	44	2	North Korea	40
3	United States	34	3	Pakistan	32
4	Japan	14	4	Argentina	29
5	India	10	5	China	18
6	Brazil	8	6	Israel	17
7	South Africa	7	7	Nigeria	16
8	Israel	5	8	Saudi Arabia	16
9	Egypt	4	9	Egypt	8
10	China	4	10	United States	8
11	Mexico	4	11	India	7
12	South Korea	3	12	South Korea	6
13	Argentina	2	13	South Africa	4
14	Saudi Arabia	2	14	Indonesia	3
15	Indonesia	2	15	Mexico	2
16	Pakistan	1	16	Japan	1
17	Nigeria	1	17	Brazil	1
18	Iran	1	18	Australia	1
19	North Korea	0	19	Canada	0
20	None of them	21	20	None of them	19
21	Don't know	8	21	Don't know	9

Note: This question was phrased differently in the 2010 survey and the country list differs between the 2012, 2011 and 2010 surveys.

No mandate for further interventions in the greater Middle East

Jane Kinninmont

Senior Research Fellow, Middle East and North Africa Programme

Although the short-lived NATO intervention in Libya has generally been portrayed as a success in the British media, it seems to have had little impact on public support for future British military interventions overseas. In this year's survey, views on military action against Iran's nuclear programme remained largely unchanged, with 45% opposing and 36% supporting. This represents only a marginal shift towards support compared with 32% in 2011. But Iran was ranked first in the 'unfavourable' rankings for the third year in a row. Meanwhile, when asked whether Britain should support popular uprisings against dictators overseas, the single most popular answer was that the UK should not get involved; a slightly lower proportion said this than last year (43%, down from 47%) but this hardly represents a significant shift.

Just 23% believe the UK has a moral responsibility to support such uprisings. As this question referred specifically to Libya, Syria and Egypt, the response suggests a high degree of public scepticism about the desirability of intervening in Syria despite the mounting atrocities there. This is likely to reflect negative perceptions of British military interventions in Afghanistan, now ongoing for more than a decade, and in Iraq. The public debate about Syria is shaped more by these ground-war experiences than the Libyan no-fly zone, as most of the fighting in Syria is on the ground and there is as yet no equivalent of Benghazi to act as a base for the opposition.

Nonetheless, just under half of those surveyed said they would approve the use of military force for humanitarian and peacekeeping reasons. This question did not refer directly to Syria and could encompass more marginal involvement in post-conflict peacekeeping situations in other areas of the world. However, it does suggest that support for future British involvement in a humanitarian intervention in Syria cannot be entirely ruled out. A much higher proportion, 75%, would approve of military action in the event of a direct threat to British territory. Perhaps the figure would be higher in the event of a direct threat to the UK mainland; the revival of tensions with Argentina over the Falkland Islands may have affected responses.

5 A Divided Coalition

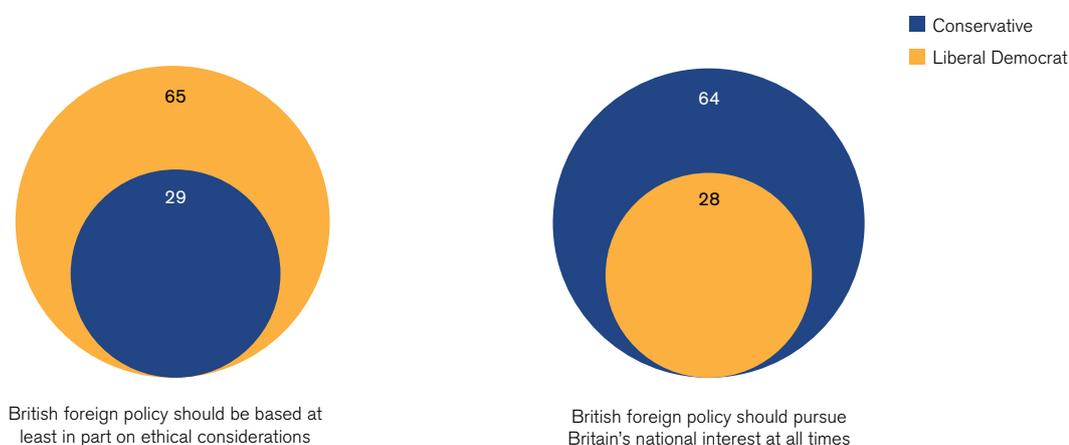
The coalition government is likely to face new challenges to its foreign policy alongside those already consuming time that would otherwise be focused on a difficult domestic policy agenda. And yet, as both this and last year's surveys reveal, there is no obvious approach to British foreign policy around which a consensus could be built. The public's attitudes to the UK's various international ambitions and choices tend to be conflicted, and both the public and opinion-formers tend to be divided over what the priorities should be. As was noted in last year's analysis, when the contradictions outweigh the consistencies, the key for any government is to try to find new links between specific popular attitudes and government policies. Underscoring the important impact that development spending can have on the domestic security of British citizens as well as on poverty-reduction efforts in developing countries is one such linkage that the coalition government is already making.

However, one of the most significant difficulties this government will face in addressing many foreign policy challenges may well be the divide between Conservative and Liberal Democrat voters. The survey reveals that the majority of those aligned to the two parties of the coalition tend to hold opposing views on almost every foreign policy issue, disagreeing about the principles, philosophy, priorities, means and ends of UK foreign policy. These patterns are particularly striking among those currently intending to vote for the coalition parties, as explored below. The views of Labour respondents tend to fall between these two parties.

A 'distinctive' foreign policy

- Of those intending to vote Conservative, 68% believe the UK should remain a great power, as opposed to only 39% of Liberal Democrats. More Liberal Democrats – 42% – asserted that the UK should accept that it is no longer a great power.
- Among Liberal Democrats, 65% believe that UK foreign policy should be based at least in part on ethical considerations. Conservatives are the direct opposite, with 64% asserting that UK foreign policy should pursue national interests at all times (see Figure 19).

Figure 19: Should ethical considerations shape foreign policy? (General public)



Note: This figure does not include 'Don't know' responses.

- For Conservatives, international terrorism (59%) is the greatest threat to the British way of life. For Liberal Democrats, it is the failure of the international financial system (55%). In general, Conservatives are likely to emphasize security and direct threats; 65% of Conservatives believe that protecting the UK, including counter-terrorism, should be the main focus of UK foreign policy, as opposed to only 38% of Liberal Democrats. The latter place a greater importance on resource scarcity and climate change, among other issues.³⁰

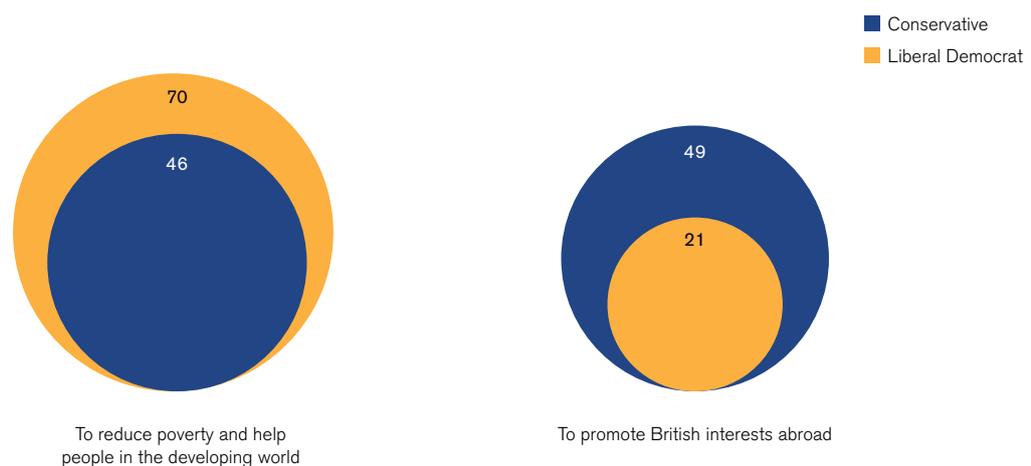
Britain and the EU

- A high proportion – 71% – of Conservatives would like the UK to hold a referendum on the UK’s membership of the EU, as opposed to only 40% of Liberal Democrats. In the event that such a referendum were held, 64% of Liberal Democrats would vote to remain a member, while 69% of Conservatives would vote to leave the EU altogether.
- 77% of Conservatives believe that the UK should never join the euro, with only 34% of Liberal Democrats being of this view. 71% of Conservatives asserted that the UK’s contribution of £8.1 billion to the EU in 2010–11 was ‘too much’, as opposed to 35% of Liberal Democrats. Among the latter, 47% believe the amount to be ‘about right’.

An island apart?

- A majority of Conservatives – 53% – believe that the armed forces are the UK’s best asset in foreign policy, with only 29% of Liberal Democrats sharing this view. In contrast, most Liberal Democrats – 49% – believe that the BBC World Service is the most important aspect of the UK’s foreign policy toolbox.
- Liberal Democrats are generally supportive of government spending on international development: 22% believe it is a key asset in foreign policy and 52% believe that the UK should spend ‘a fair amount’ of money on overseas aid. A clear majority – 70% – believe that the UK should spend money on overseas aid with the aim of reducing poverty (see Figure 20).

Figure 20: What should be the priority of overseas aid? (General public)



Note: This figure does not include ‘Don’t know’ responses.

30 These figures are based on the respondents selecting up to four options.

- In contrast, Conservatives are generally hostile towards government spending on overseas aid and believe it should be reduced – 50% asserted that the UK government should not give very much overseas aid, with 76% selecting ‘too much’ when informed of actual government spending figures.
- When asked about the reasons for the use of military force, Conservatives overwhelmingly selected options which prioritized the protection of UK territory, British nationals and British interests. However, Liberal Democrats placed a far greater emphasis on humanitarian and peacekeeping reasons, alongside a preference to act in the broader interests of the international community (see Table 2).

Table 2: When should the UK use of military force? (General public)

Question	Conservatives	Liberal Democrats
When UK territory is directly threatened	85	78
To protect British nationals abroad	64	44
For humanitarian and peacekeeping reasons	51	60
Whenever it serves British interests	41	9
Whenever it is in the broader interests of the international community	21	37
The government should never use military force	1	4
Don't know	2	5

Mars and Venus

When it comes to foreign policy, it appears that Conservatives are from Mars and Liberal Democrats are from Venus.³¹ Liberal Democrats recognize the UK's relative decline in international affairs; tend to be pro-Europe, supportive of further integration to address current economic challenges; are instinctive multilateralists with a clear belief in the importance of ethical considerations in foreign policy; are largely in favour of government spending on overseas aid with the primary aim of reducing poverty and helping people in developing countries; and are of the view that soft power is more relevant than hard power in today's world.

Conservatives, meanwhile, hold a continuing attachment to the UK as a great power; believe that national interests should be the primary determinant of international action; are preoccupied with hard security threats and direct economic risks to UK prosperity; favour hard power over soft power; are extremely sceptical of the UK's membership of the EU and would favour full UK withdrawal; are of the clear belief that government spending on overseas aid should be reduced and should only be provided in support of British national interests; and retain a bilateral, Atlanticist instinct with regard to alliances and partnerships.

This is not to say that the two parties disagree on every issue. Liberal Democrats, while more positive about the EU and more in favour of further integration, do not ignore the current difficulties and economic fissures across the continent. In the same way, Conservatives, though largely anti-Europe, still recognize benefits of cooperation with other EU countries. Separately, among opinion-formers, the two parties track each other much more closely. Labour voters provide a view that is more similar to that of their Liberal Democrat counterparts in the general public.

Until now there have not been significant public clashes within the coalition over foreign policy, despite the controversy surrounding the December 2011 European summit. The two parties have achieved a commendable unity of purpose on foreign policy, pursuing a pragmatic course which has been far more difficult to achieve on domestic policy issues. But given the likely international challenges the government will face before the next election, from the UK's relations with the EU to dealing with Iran's nuclear programme, a coalition government whose two constituencies represent such different worldviews is likely to come under increasing strain.

31 For a similar use of this terminology in an analysis of transatlantic relations, see Robert Kagan, *Of Paradise and Power: America and Europe in the New World Order* (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 2003).

6 Conclusions: Hard Choices Ahead

The Chatham House–YouGov 2012 survey highlights some difficult issues for British policy-makers and politicians. To what extent do complex foreign policy decisions demand an explicit public mandate? How much stock should be placed in the sometimes contradictory views of the public? Policy-makers will need to make sense of the patterns, contradictions and aspirations reflected in this survey. And they must decide on the degree to which they choose to respond to the views of the public, or attempt to lead public opinion in support of less popular policies.

The responses reveal that the defensiveness of the UK public towards developments in international affairs continues to grow. It tends to favour the direct pursuit of the national interest, and thinks the government's top priority should be countering terrorism and other threats to the British 'homeland'. Although it appears to agree with many of the government's foreign policy priorities, it is not convinced by its performance.

The survey also confirms the ambivalent view of the UK general public concerning the EU. It remains highly sceptical about deeper European integration and about the EU itself; in fact, almost half would vote for the UK to leave the EU altogether in an 'in/out' vote. Given a range of options, the public's most popular choice is for less integration than at present. Despite this, a clear majority continues to favour closer cooperation with EU partners across a range of policy areas that would improve UK security. For their part, opinion-formers are utterly convinced of the importance of Europe to Britain's future.

The public remains enamoured with the notion of the UK as a great power and views the armed forces as the country's greatest foreign policy asset. In stark contrast to opinion-formers, the public holds largely negative attitudes towards the UK's development spending. And, although it still favours the UK's traditional allies such as the United States, it shows a growing awareness of the importance of rising powers including China and India. The general message is clear – beyond Europe, the general public and opinion-formers hold entirely different views as to what might be the contours of a more independent foreign policy.

Given wider developments in the world and the turmoil within the EU, plus the pressure on resources at home, the coalition government will face significant challenges in the coming years. Despite a relatively unified approach to foreign policy during the coalition's first two years in office, it is clear from these results that supporters of the two parties hold opposing views on nearly every key question in foreign policy. Such different worldviews may easily clash in the coming years, especially as controversial issues such as the UK's future relationship with the EU rise in prominence.

These survey results must also be considered in the wider context of UK policy and international affairs. It has become fashionable for foreign policy analysts to diminish the importance of states and national policy-makers, sometimes painting them as the passive subjects of international forces beyond their control. But, over the next few years, British policy-makers may be challenged to make some vitally important choices, affecting UK prosperity and security. In each case, policy-makers will need to decide whether to lead or follow public opinion. For example:

- Can the government construct a viable future for the UK within, but on the margins of, a more integrated European Union? If the government cannot convince its partners to offer the UK special dispensations in return for its approval of a more integrated eurozone, will it advocate an exit from the EU? Faced with this stark choice, will the British public thank or punish the government for offering it a referendum to seal the decision?

- Can the government win public support for its growing levels of spending on development aid by emphasizing the direct benefits such spending might accrue for improving the country's long-term security?
- Can smaller and restructured armed forces still meet the popular ambitions for the UK to retain a major international role? Can the government afford to assume that there will be little public support for major UK military interventions in remote conflicts? And what happens if the UK is drawn into a serious military conflict with Iran in support of the US and other allies?

The survey reveals the divergent instincts within both the electorate and the coalition that will make such decisions even more difficult. There is no obvious approach upon which a broad-based public consensus can easily be built. The public's attitudes tend to be conflicted, and they tend to disagree with opinion-formers over priorities and approaches. Optimists clash with sceptics, interests with ethics and aspirations with resources. Resources would provide a greater range of alternatives and a degree of discretion. But budgetary pressure across government is unlikely to ease, and foreign policy, with the exception of development spending, will not be treated as a special case.

Sir Ernest Rutherford once said, 'Gentlemen, we have run out of money. It is time to start thinking.'³² Rutherford's quandary has been the coalition's since it came to office in May 2010. The challenge will be to square its own large ambitions, the limited resources at its disposal, and the often contradictory instincts of the general public.

7 Key Survey Insights

Peter Kellner
President, YouGov

British voters are divided when asked where Britain should seek its closest ties: 29% chose the US, 25% the EU and 20% emerging economies such as China, India and Brazil. Opinion-formers hold rather different views, with 46% selecting the EU, 29% the US and 17% emerging economies.

The survey exposes a strong sense that the tide in international affairs is flowing from America to China. When asked which was the world's leading power today, 47% of voters said the US and 29% China. But when asked which would be top in 20 years' time, 46% said China and just 15% the US. Opinion-formers displayed the same trend, only more strongly, with the US leading China by 72–23% today, and China leading by 60–23% in 20 years' time. No other country, or the EU, exceeds 4% either today or in the future.

The survey also found a strong sense that Britain should keep itself to itself and not seek to play a major international role. Just 23% believe the UK has a moral responsibility to support pro-democracy uprisings of the type we have seen in the Arab Spring; Britain is widely thought to spend too much on overseas aid; and a clear majority said the UK should leave the EU (though opinion-formers preferred to remain in the EU by more than two to one).

One possible reason for hostility to overseas aid and the EU is that most people think the UK spends significantly more on both than is actually the case. When asked how much the UK government spent on overseas aid and EU contributions (net of rebates), the median figures given by respondents were £20 billion on aid and £27 billion on the EU. In both cases, almost one in three Britons think the UK spends more than £50 billion a year. However, the actual figures for both are similar: £8.5 billion on aid and £8.1 billion on the EU.

Attitudes to UK spending on overseas aid depend on how the issue is framed. To address this, the sample was divided into two; one group was asked whether £8.5 billion was too little, about right or too much; the other group was asked the same question but in terms of the share of national income rather than billions of pounds. When people were informed of the cash figures, 61% said this was too much while just 29% said it was too little or about right. But when people were told the percentage instead, the figures were much closer: 45% 'too much', 36% 'too little' or 'about right'.

Even though only 30% of the general public want Britain to stay in the EU, clear majorities want it to work closely with the rest of the EU on counter-terrorism, illegal migration, energy and climate change, trade, defence, relations with emerging economies and foreign policy. Almost as many want the UK to work closely on the same issues with the United States.

In broad terms, most Britons fall into one of three groups: pro-EU (30%); supporters of international cooperation in most areas but opponents of EU membership (also around 30%); opponents of international cooperation in most of the key areas listed (around 15%). The remaining 25% are people who express 'internationalist' and 'nationalist' sentiments in broadly equal amounts.

Opponents of EU membership seem to have stronger views than supporters. We listed 15 words and phrases that different people associate with the European Union – a mixture of positive, negative and neutral – and asked respondents to tick all those that they personally associate with the EU. Only one was cited by a majority of pro-Europeans: the freedom to study, work and live anywhere in the EU. Three were cited by most opponents of EU membership: loss of national power, bureaucracy and 'a waste of money'.

When provided with a range of options on the future of the EU, rather than a straight 'in-out' question on the UK's EU membership, the most popular option, at 31%, was 'a less integrated Europe than now with the EU amounting to little more than a free trade area'. If that were on offer, the proportion wanting

to quit altogether falls to 26%. But only 28% in total pick any of the other three options: status quo (16%), greater integration (8%) or a fully integrated Europe with all major decisions taken by a European government (4%).

The survey also repeated a number of tracking questions we asked in 2010 and 2011. British attitudes on most issues remain fairly stable, but there have been some specific changes in opinion. The steady improvement in relations with Ireland, together with that country's actions to tackle its financial problems, have increased Britain's warmth towards its neighbour. When given a list of European countries and asked to pick out those to which people feel particularly favourable or unfavourable, Ireland's net score has climbed from plus two in 2010 (favourable 12%, unfavourable 10%) to plus 18 today (favourable 23%, unfavourable 5%).

When people were asked the same question about a range of other countries, there was a marked improvement in the reputation of the United States, with a shift from plus three in 2010 (favourable 20%, unfavourable 17%) to plus 26 today (favourable 34%, unfavourable 8%). Could it be that in 2010, America's reputation was coloured by the way its sub-prime mortgage problems had triggered the recent financial crisis, and that now, two years later, those memories have faded?

Britons feel less harshly towards Israel. The proportion holding a favourable opinion remains low (4% in 2010, 5% now), but the proportion who single it out as a country towards which people feel unfavourable has almost halved in two years, falling from 32% to 17%. In contrast, the latest disputes over the Falkland Islands have damaged Argentina's reputation. Just 9% felt unfavourably towards it last year. This year's figure is 29%.

Appendix

Survey specifics

YouGov, on behalf of Chatham House, conducted two surveys. The first was of a representative sample of 2,079 adults. This fieldwork was undertaken between 13 and 15 June 2012. The survey was carried out online and the figures have been weighted and are representative of all GB adults (aged 18 and over).

The second survey was conducted using the YouGovStone panel and surveyed 735 panellists on YouGovStone's panel of influential adults. Fieldwork was undertaken between 14 and 21 June 2012. The survey was carried out online.

As a consequence of rounding during the collation of results, responses to survey questions do not always add up to 100%.

YouGovStone

YouGovStone is a specialized opinion research company, a joint venture between YouGov plc and Carole Stone. YouGovStone has created a network of over 4,000 opinion leaders drawn from the worlds of business, media, politics, academia, science and the arts. These 'influentials' respond to regular surveys on topics of public interest, providing detailed insights to YouGovStone clients into what opinion leaders think about key issues of the day.

YouGov survey methods

Most of the surveys conducted by YouGov are sent to a nationally representative sample of British adults selected from YouGov's online panel. For this, YouGov draws a sub-sample of the panel that is representative of the GB electorate by age, gender, social class, political party identification, region and type of newspaper (upmarket, mid-market, red-top, no newspaper), and invites this sub-sample to complete a survey. Once the sample has been identified, YouGov's in-house software sends out email invitations for a survey. Respondents are never told what the survey will be about prior to clicking the link and this aims to prevent respondents only taking surveys on topics in which they have an interest. Only respondents invited to the survey may take part in it and once they follow the link to the webpage, they are taken to a survey and may complete this only once.

Almost all surveys involve statistical weighting, whether they are conducted online, face-to-face or by telephone. This is a fine-tuning measure to ensure that the published results properly reflect the population they seek to measure. At YouGov, the targets for the weighted data are derived from three sources:

1. Census data;
2. National Readership survey (a random probability survey comprising 34,000 random face-to-face interviews conducted annually);
3. YouGov estimates on party identity. These are derived from an analysis of more than 80,000 responses to YouGov surveys at, or shortly after, the May 2010 general election, when respondents were asked both i) whether they generally thought of themselves as Labour, Conservative, Liberal Democrat etc. (party identity); and ii) which party they would support, or had supported, in the 2010 general election. Data are weighted to May 2010 party identity wherever this information is available. The weights used for party identity are consistent with the outcome of the 2010 general election.

Given the debate surrounding the online approach to research, YouGov recognizes the need to ensure communities that are digitally excluded (e.g. the elderly) are represented in each project. YouGov has established an online research panel of over 350,000 adults living in the UK, from which samples can be easily drawn to cover almost all requirements. YouGov expends much of its recruitment resource concentrating on areas traditionally 'hard to reach' online. A large number of people on the panel are economically inactive, of C2DE socio-economic status or over retirement age, for example. Respondents can join the panel by either signing up directly on the website, being referred by a friend or family member, receiving an email invitation from YouGov, or responding to advertisements on the web. YouGov targets its email invitation to the specific needs of the panel and can create online advertisements which are targeted to certain demographic groups.



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